The National Future Farmer

June–July, 1988

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The Bottom Line

Perhaps the most famous mouse since Mickey made the headlines in April. The U. S. Patent and Trademark Office issued a patent for the souped-up little rodent and set off a controversy that will be debated for years.

This was the first time a patent has been issued for an animal. In this case, the patent was issued to researchers at Harvard University for genetically altering a mouse's genes to make the animal more useful for cancer-related research.

Other patents for animals will surely follow as people attempt to commercialize on the biotechnology process. In the case of the mouse, the scientists isolated a gene that causes cancer in some animals. They then injected the gene into fertilized eggs and developed a new breed of genetically altered mice.

The argument develops over whether man should attempt to alter animal life in this manner. Some are opposed on environmental grounds, others base their opposition on religious concerns. Already legislation has been introduced in the Congress to stop granting animal patents until the ethical questions can be more fully debated.

On the other side of the question is the argument that what has been done is no different than what mankind has been doing with animals for centuries. Only the process is different. Through improved breeding, man has been creating better livestock and increase their profitability.

Biotechnology makes it possible for plants and animals to be made more resistant to pests, diseases and other stresses. This new age for agriculture is just beginning and granting a patent for an animal is just another step in the process.

Today's FFA members will feel the full impact of biotechnology during their careers in agriculture so it is important that you be informed and help American agriculture keep its competitive edge.

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Mailbag

Safety Tips

I enjoyed reading "FFA in Action" in the December-January issue. It was great. Mostly I liked the parts about safety tips and fighting fire with care.

Kim Wilkins
Water Valley, Mississippi

Professional Publicity

You did a smooth job with the new ag professionals article in the April-May issue. The photo showed up far better than I could have expected.

The publication continues to read well and I am impressed with the advertisements and their attractiveness to our upcoming agribusiness and farming professionals.

Wayne A. Maley, Director
American Society of Agricultural Engineers
St. Joseph, Michigan

Official Dress

In the recent article "State Officers Attend Green Week," (April-May) I noticed something unusual. Two of the state officers are pictured without full official dress. I feel that representing a state organization without full official dress is extremely tacky.

Neil Schneider
Peoria, Arizona

WORLD AGRISCIENCE Studies

Across the Sea

When my daughter's December-January issue of the FFA magazine arrived, I sent it to her in Germany. She was awarded an exchange student scholarship by the Congress-Bundestag program, one of two New Mexico winners.

Ruth Pelletier
Cliff, New Mexico

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has made possible my stay here in Germany through World AgriScience Studies. I encourage any FFA member to get involved in WASS or WEA. It's worthwhile!

Lea Symonds
Oberessendorf, West Germany

I am currently a WEA participant in Australia and I have been receiving my FUTURE FARMER magazine from home. My host families have been most impressed with your publication.

Jody Petty
Queensland, Australia

Cover Girl a Hit

I would like to order 15 copies of the April-May issue of the magazine. By the way, that is my daughter on the cover and I can't tell you how proud all her family and friends were to see her on the front.

Lyn Lail
Siler City, North Carolina

FFA Inspiration

I enjoy the FFA a lot. It has helped me in all phases.

Arlen Michelson
Grace, Idaho

Memories Brought Back

It was with a great deal of enthusiasm that your article "FFA's Third Decade" (February-March) was read by me. The thoughts and most treasured pleasant memories that were brought back to me were uncountable.

James K. Willis
Richmond, Virginia

Read All About It!

On behalf of the Chowchilla FFA I would like to thank you for such a nice article about our program in the February-March issue. We are very proud of our students, program and community!

The students read the article with great interest and were excited about being in a national magazine. Members of the community, board of education and advisory committee receive a subscription, thus we get positive reviews from people who support our efforts.

J. Scott Vernon, Advisor
Chowchilla, California

Send letters or notes with name, address and chapter to MAILBAG, The National FUTURE FARMER, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, VA 22309. All letters are subject to editing.

Looking Ahead

Hi-Tech Tomato Testing

Monsanto Company has begun small scale field tests of two strains of genetically engineered tomato plants in Florida recently–one resists tobacco mosaic virus and the other resists attacks by certain insects.

For the first type of tomato plant, genetic information that directs the plant's protein "coat" was inserted. The presence of the coat protein in the plant cells prevents the tobacco mosaic virus from infecting the plant.

For the insect-resistent tomato plant, a gene was taken from a naturally-occuring bacterium that produces a protein deadly to certain insects. The protein has no effect on other insects, animals or humans.

The disease and insect-resistant plants have been successfully tested under laboratory conditions, but Monsanto said field testing is necessary to determine the potential commercial value of the technology under the stresses and variables of normal field conditions.

Identical Boars

A pair of genetically identical Hampshire boars, named Pete and Repeat, have been produced at the University of California, Davis, by splitting a single embryo into two embryos. It is believed that this is only the second time that a pair of twin pigs have been born using this method.

According to Trish Berger, assistant professor of animal science at UC Davis, the purpose of producing the identical boars is so researchers "can perform experiments in which we change the environmental factors."

For example, Berger can vary the boars' environmental temperature or the nutritional content of their diets. She will then study how these changes affect their ability to reproduce. Since Pete and Repeat have exactly the same genetic background, she will know that any variation could be due to an unforeseen difference in the environment.

Although the twin boars make ideal research animals, it is unlikely that embryo splitting will become practical for the average pork producer because of the technical difficulties involved, Berger says.

Entomologist William Wilson and an assistant inspect honey bee hives near Weslaco, Texas, for mite infestation. *USDA photo by Tim McCabe*

Bees Breathe Easier

A microscopic bug, the tracheal mite, is one of the honey bee's biggest enemies. The mite lives, feeds and reproduces in a bee's breathing tubes. It blocks oxygen flow, robbing flight muscles of the oxygen needed for bees to fly—but help is on the way.

Researcher William T. Wilson, a USDA Agricultural Research Service entomologist in Weslaco, Texas, has found that menthol vapor, if given over a three-week period in the hive, will kill tracheal mites without harming honey bees.

"In our tests, mites started dying within a few hours after we put menthol crystals in the hive. In three days, half were gone, and then after three weeks, bees were mite-free," says Wilson, who heads up a team to study the bee mite problem. First detected in 1984 in Texas, the mite has since been found in 31 states.

"Menthol doesn't hurt honey bees but does irritate them enough to make them fan their wings." He adds, "Of course, this is what we want, because fanning spreads menthol around the hive."

The treatment procedure would be relatively simple, Wilson says. To kill mites, beekeepers would put a screen packet (about the size of a standard envelope) filled with menthol crystals in each hive.

Cost per hive is estimated at fifty cents to a dollar—a "reasonable amount" to a beekeeper, Wilson says.

Before menthol can be used for this purpose, Wilson cautions, it would have to be approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Although menthol is already in products such as cough drops, applying it as a pesticide requires registration for a new use.

Dairy Research Video

A recently released video/film, "Product Research...Assuring the Future," reviews current, ongoing research funded by the dairy industry. The program, sponsored by the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board, features interviews with university researchers on specific projects that ultimately may result in new and better dairy products.

The 10-minute video/film (#19957) may be ordered in VHS and 16mm film formats on a free-loan basis from Modern Talking Picture Service, Scheduling Department, 5000 Park Street North, St. Petersburg, FL 33709. Include choice of format and preferred viewing dates.

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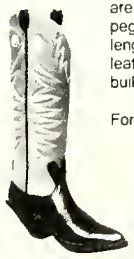

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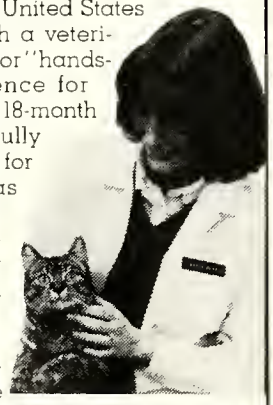

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News In Brief

Warmer FFA Jackets

The most significant change in the official FFA blue corduroy jacket in over 50 years is coming this fall. A sturdy, fiber-fill zip-out liner with full-length sleeves and cuffs will help keep the cold out while preserving the classic look of the FFA jacket.

Members will be able to order new jackets with the liner installed or purchase a liner that can be sewn into their existing jacket. Prices and size availability will be announced soon.

Scholarship Winners

Thanks to National FFA Foundation sponsors, the financial burden of college will be a lighter this fall for 216 national FFA scholarship winners. A record-setting total of $241,000 was contributed to the scholarship program this year. More than 1,275 applications were judged in the process of identifying the national winners.

World Pork Expo

The 1988 World Pork Expo, held June 12-14 in Des Moines, Iowa, will provide a number of attractions for FFA members.

An ExpoCollege will offer FFA members and their advisors a chance to explore the realities of tomorrow's adult pork producers. Areas such as animal welfare, waste management, record keeping, swine herd management, livestock confinement safety and pork marketing will be covered in a computer-aided learning laboratory.

Computers and a number of pork-specific software programs will be made available to youth and their advisors by Agri-Education, Inc. FFA advisors can also learn how to integrate the computer materials into their existing courses of study at a series of daily seminars.

The 1987 National FFA Swine Proficiency Award winners will be attending the Expo courtesy of FFA Foundation sponsor Pfizer Agricultural Division. Regional winners Roger Ritchey of Burlington, Indiana; Bryan Romine of Rogersville, Alabama; Dale Schwartz of San Angelo, Texas; and Scott Stauffer of Arlington, Ohio, will participate in Expo activities including workshops, media interviews and a dinner with Pfizer executives. The winners will be accompanied by their advisors.

The World Pork Expo is a presentation of the National Pork Producers Council in association with the National Pork Board.

Dodge Offers Special Deal to FFA Families

FFA members and their families can save $400 in addition to existing incentives on most new domestic Dodge trucks and gain an additional $50 for their local FFA chapter with each truck purchase.

The savings are available through a special discount program offered by the Dodge Car and Truck Division of Chrysler Motors.

The program began April 1 and will continue through July 31. The discount and $50 chapter donation are available on FFA family purchases of all new domestic Dodge trucks (excluding Dodge Caravan and Dodge Dakota S models).

For more information, FFA families can see their local Dodge dealers or write to Dodge FFA Incentive Headquarters, P.O. Box 3138, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302-9929.

A long-time supporter of FFA, Chrysler is one of only three companies that has been a continuous National FFA Foundation sponsor for more than 35 years.

WCP Staff Named

Directors and counselors who will conduct the Washington Conference Program (WCP) this summer in Washington, D.C., have been named for both conference locations.

Rob Millman of Indiana will serve as director at the Key Bridge Marriott Hotel location. Working with Millman will be Cheryl Helmeid, Wisconsin; Darin Coert, California; Laura Hobbs, Idaho; and Brad Parrish, Michigan.

Michelle Benoit of Kansas will be director at the Rosslyn Westpark Hotel, a new facility for WCP. Joining Benoit at the Westpark will be Doug Phillips, Ohio; Kim Buethe, Kansas; David Koepke, Nebraska; and Woody Howard, Washington.

Six different sessions of WCP will run throughout the summer starting June 13 and ending July 30.

Wisconsin Member Meets Pope John Paul II

Daniel Kitzhaber of Greenwood, Wisconsin, met Pope John Paul II in Vatican City, January 9, while on FFA's Work Experience Abroad (WEA) exchange program in Italy.

Kitzhaber was in Rome January 7-9, to attend the "Giovaninsiemi," the national convention of Cultivatori Diretti, Italy's agricultural youth organization. He met the pontiff on the final day of the convention when participants of the convention traveled to Vatican City for an address by the pope.

Kitzhaber says that since he was an international guest, he was seated in a VIP section of the auditorium where the pope spoke the group. When the pope finished his address, he shook hands with everyone in the VIP section, including Kitzhaber.

"It was truely an incredible feeling to meet the pope," said Kitzhaber, "I was almost in a state of shock. I didn't know whether to speak to him in English or Italian, since I hadn't been in the country very long. I just listened to what other people were saying to him as he made his way down the row, and then mumbled something the best I could in Italian when we met."

Kitzhaber had started his WEA exchange last August in Ireland where he worked on a dairy farm for three months. He then moved to Italy in December for another three months to explore agriculture there.

Pope John Paul II greets Daniel Kitzhaber of the Greenwood, Wisconsin, FFA Chapter in Vatican City.

PAS National Conference Held

The National Postsecondary Agricultural Student Organization's 1988 National Conference, March 13-15 in Green Bay, Wisconsin, attracted 560 members, advisors and industry leaders who proved the meeting's theme "Participation + Action = Success."

Nearly 400 students participated in seven national contests and over $18,500 was awarded in cash prizes.

State winners competed in Speakers for Agriculture, Employment Interview and College Bowl contests and vied for top honors in the Agricultural Machinery Service Technician Awards and Planning for Progress programs.

Conference participants also toured Wisconsin agriculture, attended educational seminars led by industry representatives, considered organizational business and selected new national leaders.

The 1988-89 PAS National Officers are: Joe Funke, president, Hawkeye Institute of Technology, Waterloo, Iowa; Mary Kay Ball, secretary, Black Hawk College, East Campus, Kewanee, Illinois; vice presidents Larry Clifton, Clark Technical College, Springfield, Ohio; Dale Davis, Wayne Community College, Goldsboro, North Carolina; Cheryl Jordan, Crowder College, Neosho, Missouri; and David Klafehn, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Morrisville, New York.

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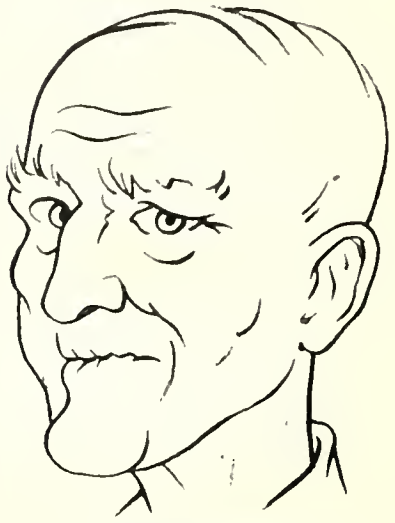

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The New Ag Professionals: Specialty Careers

New technology and an industry on the rebound offer new avenues for today's agriculture students.

Photo courtsey of Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.

The growth of biotechnology and an increase in traditional farm-related jobs are creating employment opportunities for students in agricultural fields.

"Traditional farming jobs are opening up again as farms are getting larger and need specialists," said Scott Johnson, placement director of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

"People assume there are no jobs because of farm economy problems, but it's not the case," says Johnson.

Students going into meat and animal sciences, for example, will find that animal nutritionists are in demand both on the farm and in sales. "Feed companies are working to provide more services to the farmer and therefore are looking for people who can work with the farmers in promoting a product," said Johnson. Dairy science majors can look forward to similar positions as dairy herd managers.

Although the demand for agronomists is not as strong as it once was, Johnson sees the field starting to grow again. "Enrollments are down, causing a shortage of students, and we're starting to see the demand strengthen again," Johnson says.

Jobs in agricultural biotechnology are continuing to increase rapidly, says Johnson. A common misconception is that only the hard-core majors, such as genetics, biochemistry and bacteriology are the way into such jobs, says Johnson.

Advanced degrees in these areas are recommended for students interested in conducting basic science research. But many biotech companies are looking for people with the basic lab skills any student can develop emphasizing natural science in their major field of study.

"Biotechnology fields offer a much broader spectrum than the lab work and genetics that most students associate with the field," Johnson says. "The field is growing so fast that some of the jobs students will get don't even exist yet," he adds.

On biotechnology: "The field is growing so fast that some of the jobs students will get don't even exist yet," —Johnson

Biotechnology also spawns many jobs in sales and marketing that students can transfer into or specifically train for by developing communications skills.

Majors such as agricultural journalism, agricultural economics and agricultural business management teach the skills companies need to sell and market their products.

A U.S. Department of Agriculture national assessment of employment opportunities published in 1986 reported that for the next five years, "U.S. colleges and universities are expected to produce insufficient numbers of graduates with food and agricultural expertise to fill important scientific and professional positions."

The report said the job categories with the most potential for growth are marketing, merchandising and sales representatives and scientists, engineers and related specialists.

Johnson points out that a few specialty areas at the college consistently provide jobs for its students. Dietetics majors find a steady need in hospitals and health care facilities. The turf program provides good placement in golf course-related work. Food science majors are in demand in the food processing industry.

"There is a steady and stable demand for these majors," says Johnson, "and students who prepare themselves well often find the positions they want."

No matter what the major, Johnson emphasized the need to plan early and to get good work-related experience, through internships and jobs related to your interests.

Equally important he says, is developing communication, leadership and decision-making skills. Involvement in student organizations is a good way to gain this experience, he adds. •••

"HOW I MADE $18,000 FOR COLLEGE BY WORKING WEEKENDS."

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Americans At Their Best.

Stars on Tour '88

An introduction to European agricultural policy

By Jeri D. Mattics

They've got McDonalds and the Mona Lisa. They wear Levi's and listen to Bruce Springsteen. And they tend to know more about Americans than we know about ourselves. They are Europeans and they understand the importance of the world around us.

Why should understanding other cultures, in particular the Europeans, be important to today's young people? If your future is in agriculture, you'll probably be interested in knowing where the markets for your products will be. The crops French and German farmers plant will have the same impact on your operation as what your neighbors plant. The international supply of grain, not the United States' supply and demand, will largely determine the size of the check you'll take home from the local elevator.

The eight regional star farmers and agribusinessmen along with Dr. Larry Case, national FFA advisor; Lennie Gamage, FFA international program specialist; and Bill Stagg, FFA director of information took a nine-day European tour in March that resulted in raising their awareness level of the European Community's (EC) role in the world marketplace. Also, the FFA delegation received an extensive lesson in international marketing and foreign policy.

The tour, sponsored by the Chrysler Corporation Fund as a special project of the National FFA Foundation, took the stars to Hamburg, West Germany; Brussels, Belgium; and Paris, France for a series of meetings with producers, processors, importers, marketing representatives, educators, student leaders and government officials. The week finished with a visit to the Paris International Agriculture Show, one of the largest agricultural expositions in the world and a showcase for European agriculture.

After returning from the experience, Star Farmer of America Frank Howey from Monroe, North Carolina, said, "the trip really opened my eyes to the importance of international trade to U.S. agriculture. Their policies are geared toward self-reliance. Europe used to be a net importer of ag products, now it is a net exporter. Not only are they now serving their internal markets, they're gaining a stronghold on other external world markets which we used to dominate."

Simmons, Howey, McWilliams, Blakley, Standridge, Willis, Porter and Ruehling (l to r) visited the Place de la Concorde in Paris, France.

During their visit to EC headquarters in Brussels, Belgium, the group was introduced to the actual size, complexity and operation of the EC. Howey explained, "We, as Americans in general, don't understand the European marketplace in-depth the way the Europeans understand American markets. I had always thought the European Community (EC) was just a trade organization which governed trade between a few countries. While on the tour I learned it is a large political structure which governs Europe in a role almost identical to our federal government. It has a parliament similar to Congress, an executive branch and a judicial system. It even has its own currency, the Eurodollar, that is traded in currency markets across the globe."

National FFA Advisor Larry Case

The Stars met with Willem Zerk of the U.S. Meat Export Federation in Hamburg, Germany, to discuss promotional efforts for U.S. meat in Europe.

Photos by Bill Stagg

added, "The Europeans have banded together to turn 12 somewhat small countries into a marketing and political powerhouse. It's clear that the world in which we compete has—and will continue—to change. Today's high school agriculture students must understand and be a part of the international agriculture market if they are to adapt to the new realities. The EC represents over 320 million people. Americans have got to start thinking of themselves as one part of the global market instead of the biggest trader on the floor."

Case continued, "We need to start studying our competition more intensively. Washington Redskins head coach Joe Gibbs doesn't go into a game without watching the opponents' game films. Yet we as a nation are trading in the global marketplace without pausing to do our homework."

By doing our homework, Case says we can discover more by looking beyond the surface of *what* is happening to *why* it is happening. One reason is that the U.S. has a "cheap food" policy which means our government attempts to keep agricultural products at a relatively low price level. U.S. agricultural policy is based on *economic* policy.

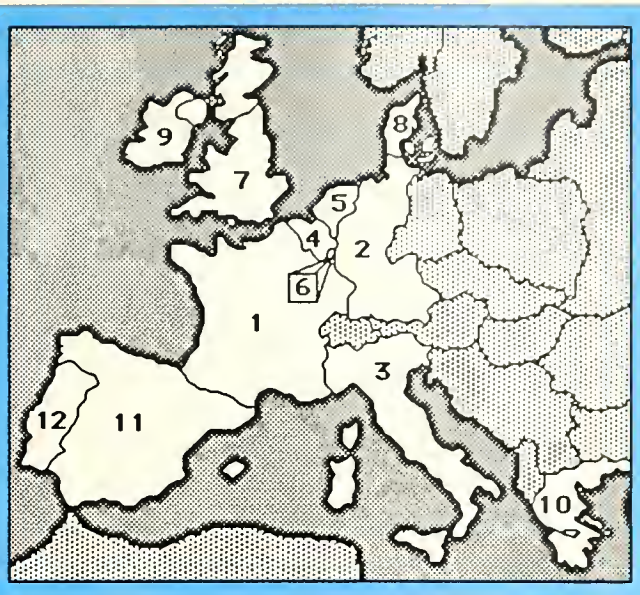
The EC, on the other hand, is very proud of its agriculture and subsidizes its producers who are not competitive to keep them on their farms. Thus, EC agricultural policy is based on *social* policy. What it all boils down to is that even though U.S. farmers may have a lower production cost per unit, they cannot market their products competitively in Europe because of EC policy.

EC policies prevent sales of foreign commodities into Europe through a trade barrier known as the variable levy. To protect European farmers from foreign competition, the EC sets a minimum price at which foreign agricultural commodities can be purchased by European importers. If the world market price falls below that minimum EC price, a levy or import tax is imposed that is equal to the difference between the world price and the EC price.

For instance, when wheat is selling for $4.20 per bushel in Europe and in Chicago for $3.10, the EC will add a variable levy (an import tax or fee) to the U.S. wheat so its price is equal to that of the European wheat.

Jeff Simmons, eastern region star agribusinessman from Penn Yan, New York, was surprised, not only at the high levels at which the Europeans support

(Continued on Page 32)



The European Community is comprised of 12 member nations. They are: France (1), Germany (2), Italy (3), Belgium (4), The Netherlands (5), Luxembourg (6), the United Kingdom (7), Denmark (8), Ireland (9), Greece (10), Spain (11), and Portugal (12).

The European Community Explained

The European Community (EC) is a union of 12 European countries formed to remove the economic barriers that had divided them in the past. The EC provides a framework within which the 12 current EC members have agreed to gradually combine their economies and eventually consider uniting their governments.

This type of European union was discussed for centuries, but it was not until the devastation left by World War II that the union was viewed as necessary. Postwar economic chaos and tense relations with communist countries led Winston Churchill to declare in 1946, "We must create a sort of United States of Europe."

Structure

The EC is structured much like the United States government. In the U.S., the president and his cabinet make up the executive branch. In Europe, the Commission serves as the EC's executive branch. The Commission is headquartered in Brussels, Belgium, and consists of 17 commissioners appointed by common agreement of the 12 governments. Each country is represented and the largest four (the United Kingdom, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, and Italy) supply two commissioners.

The EC's Council of Ministers represents the national governments of the 12 member states and is the primary legislative body of the Community. All significant EC decisions are made in the Council. The European Parliament (EP) is the only EC institution that directly represents the people of Europe, similar to the U.S. Congress. The Parliament must be consulted by the Commission before proposals are forwarded to the Council of Ministers for decision. The real clout of the EP lies in budgetary matters where it shares authority with the Council.

The EC's Court of Justice is very similar to that of the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court determines if EC laws, as embodied in treaties, are interpreted and implemented correctly. The 12 justices, representing each member state, serve renewable 6-year terms. Court decisions are reached by simple majority. The Court sits in Luxembourg.

Trade

The authors of the EC treaties recognized the key to economic unity would be a customs union permitting the completely free movement of goods, capital and people within Western Europe. By 1968, all member-to-member trade barriers had been abolished and a customs union established.

The Community is the world's largest trading unit, accounting for roughly 15 percent of world trade. Its total imports from third countries in 1985 amounted to $307 billion, compared to U.S. imports of $362 billion. It is also the United States' largest trading partner outside North America. In 1985, 23 percent of all U.S.

(Continued on Page 32)

Taking Stock in Landscaping

FFA member Lisa Rienstra prepares for a career in the nursery and landscape business.

By Andrew Markwart

Southern California has a personality all its own. The lifestyle is fast but the people are easy-going. It could be the seemingly endless sunshine or the fact that Hollywood is just up Interstate 5 that makes people's priorities lean toward fast cars and luxurious houses.

It doesn't take much driving around to see that wherever there is an open piece of land, stakes with red flags mark where construction has started on future homes. These markers seem to lead south from Los Angeles, about halfway to San Diego, to the small town of Fallbrook, California.

It's in Fallbrook that Lisa Rienstra, 17, is watching the housing construction explosion with an eye on her future. Many new homeowners hire interior designers to make sure the inside of their house looks just right. They also want the outside to be just as impressive, but homeowners usually know less about flowers and shrubs than wallpaper and drapes. This is where Rienstra plans to stake her claim.

Lisa has been studying landscape architecture and ornamental horticulture at Fallbrook High School for the last four years preparing for a career in landscape design. The classes are taught by agriculture instructors Scott Duffin and Bill Rienstra, who is also her father.

The classes at Fallbrook stress both scientific understanding of plant matter and how that applies to landscaping tasks. In her landscape architecture class, Lisa designed the landscape for the new house her parents had recently built. Most of the plan was used in the final landscaping—not an easy accomplishment when your father is an authority on the subject.

Her interest in plant species landed Lisa on the chapter's ornamental horticulture team. After placing second in the state her sophmore year, Lisa decided to give it another try in 1987. The team placed third, but Lisa placed first high individual in the state.

A profitable part of Lisa's horticulture and landscape program has been her Supervised Occupational Experience (SOE) project. Since planting a few seeds to get started in her freshman year, her current inventory has grown into 3,000 container plants. Throughout high school she sold about 6,000 plants per year on a wholesale basis to two local nurseries in Fallbrook and at FFA plant sales held every month at the high school agriculture department.

Between the horticulture classes in school, the tough competition at state contests and growing her own plant stock, Lisa developed a number of skills that are now paying off for her at her job at the Fallbrook Garden Center.

Lisa acquired most of her landscape and horticulture expertise from her agriculture instructor, FFA advisor, and father, Bill Rienstra. *Photos by Author*

Since last March, Lisa has been learning the real-world business side of nursery landscaping and ornamental horticulture from her employer, Sherri Eisert. After her background in production and selling on the wholesale market, Lisa says, "Working here at the Garden Center I get to see the retail end of the business which is a new experience for me. Sherri works with me in sales, like teaching me how to approach the customers."

About a third of Lisa's time is spent in sales and the other two-thirds working with the plant stock. Eisert says the garden center benefits from Lisa's strong horticulture background. "She's more knowledgeable about the plant stock than I am," said Eisert.

"For instance, a man came in the other day with a list of scientific names of plants he didn't understand. Lisa already knew the (common plant) names and took the time to answer all of his questions. It would have taken me much more time to look them up. The customer told me she was a real asset to our business."

Lisa says she enjoys the interaction with the customers and the satisfaction that comes with solving their problems. "Many people aren't really sure what they want, so I try to help them as much as I can. I ask 'What shape are you looking for, will it be in sun or shade?" You want the people to go home happy because you want them back."

Eisert has seen Lisa grow in her job over the past year. "She is very reliable and has caught on well to salesmanship. Lisa has real direction for someone who is 17 years old."

That sense of direction has shown through in Lisa's high school activities. Her FFA honors include Star Greenhand, Star Chapter Farmer, Star Section State Farmer, chapter treasurer and 1987-88 chapter president. At 5' 11" Lisa has also been a key player as center on Fallbrook's girl's basketball team and has excelled as well in volleyball.

Lisa's hard-work attitude and active FFA leadership was rewarded last fall when she was named Nursery Operations Proficiency winner of the western region. The Nursery Operations proficiency award is sponsored by MSD AGVET Division of Merck & Company, Incorporated, and the General Fund of the National FFA Foundation.

Lisa plans on majoring in either Landscape Architecture or Ornamental Horticulture at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo this fall. Her long-range dream is to own a combination nursery garden center/florist shop/landscaping business somewhere in California.

Given California's inviting climate and amount of new homes being built, business may well be blooming in the future for Lisa Rienstra. ...

(Facing page) Lisa Rienstra, right, is learning the retail nursery business from Sherri Eisert, manager of the Fallbrook Garden Center.

Agriculture students learn how to use computers in their classes. At Vicksburg, some ag classes do "double duty" as science classes and need not be electives. Clockwise from left, are Todd Harmon, Steve Dally, teacher Roger Swartzendruber, Joe Wilson and Todd VanMaanen.

Vo-Ag in Vicksburg

How Local People Revitalized and Saved the Program

By Dick Lehnert

About five years ago, the superintendent of the Vicksburg (Michigan) Community Schools apsory Committee with a tough message.

The vo-ag program, the superintendent said, was declining in enrollment. There were too few students. If the decline continued, it would not be worth the taxpayers' money to keep the program going.

To Robert Thompson, now 30, a grower of hybrid seed corn for Pioneer, the idea that vo-ag might fail in Vicksburg spurred him to action. He was chairman of the advisory committee of the last vo-ag program in Kalamazoo County. He, and the other eight committee members, began to talk about the problems.

Some of them were really close to home. A big problem was that farm kids—not even the children of farmers on the advisory committee—found the vo-ag program valuable.

Hog farmer Bob Harper's son didn't take vo-ag courses and was not a member of the FFA chapter. Dairyman Bill Oswalt's son wasn't in either.

"We decided to ask the kids why," Thompson said.

Mike Oswalt, who is now a senior in the animal science program at Michigan State University, answered the question in a way Thompson still remembers: "Those are Mickey Mouse classes. We're into college prep."

It took about two years of work after that, but the vocational agriculture program at Vicksburg is now college prep. The advisory committee revised the curriculum and turned the program around.

"We realized from talking to the kids that our program had to be college preparatory," Thompson said. "It would be better if we could take the word vocational right out of it."

The word "vocational" poses problems, not just in Vicksburg but statewide. School counselors tend to interpret it as meaning "a place for kids who won't go to college." Even worse, they use it as "a dumping ground for low-caliber students," the unmotivated ones who'd rather not be in school at all.

There are, as well, very few vocations left on farms. For youngsters who will return to working farms, production courses are less important than marketing and business courses. So farm kids were avoiding a program that shunted them away from their real goals.

"Only about 2 percent of people can farm," Thompson said. "But almost 25 percent of us will work within jobs related to food and agriculture." A challenge was to attract those students who would hold such jobs in the future.

Another big problem today is that high school students don't have much time to fool around. They are serious. "We require 20 credits for graduation," Thompson said. "There are only 24 credit hours of class time available (six hours a day for four years), and much of that is devoted to English, science and math."

Realizing all these things, the advisory committee set out to recreate the vo-ag program at Vicksburg High School.

Attracting Students

"We needed numbers to make the program work," Thompson said. "We needed a beginning agriculture course that would attract students." The answer was found in cooperation with the science department.

All ninth graders must take science. It is required for graduation. Under the new system, students can take that science course in the agriculture department.

"Our beginning agriculture course is natural science with an ag flavor," Thompson said. "Instead of dissecting frogs, the kids dissect chickens."

The fall semester is about animals: cells, animal classification, animal nutrition, the digestive, respiratory, circulatory, nervous, endocrine, skeletal and reproductive systems, genetics. It is basic

biology with farm animal application.

The second semester is all about plants, but emphasis is put on plants important to agriculture.

Many kids flock to the course because of the practical aspect. That gives the agriculture program its base of numbers. It takes some pressure off the science department. But most important, it gives the student a required science course. Agriculture does not need to compete as an elective at the beginning level.

Opening Their Eyes

"Once we have their interest, we try to open their eyes to all the careers within agriculture," Thompson said. In the tenth grade, the first semester is similar to a business or commercial course. It is devoted to exploring the many jobs and occupations available.

In addition, the course deals with such skills as applying for and holding a job. It deals with social skills, personal appearance, grooming, making friends, borrowing money, understanding banking procedures and how to file income tax returns.

In some years, the course is taught by the high school counselor. Outside speakers are a big part of the program. "The high school counselors now know a lot about agriculture and all the careers in it," Thompson said.

The second semester is devoted to ornamental horticulture and landscaping. It's like an agronomy course, with emphasis on soils and plants, but it focuses on and works with the large bedding plant industry of Kalamazoo County. It has broad appeal and broad support from local industry.

By the eleventh grade, students who are seriously aiming at a farm or agricultural career take a two-hour-a-day course that focuses on farm and agribusiness management, record-keeping, mechanics and production.

There are eight computers in the vo-ag room, so students will comply with the new state law requiring a half-credit of computer science—and do it within the agriculture course setting.

In the senior year, the program is independent study. Cooperative and supervised occupational education projects, in which students work for employees to gain job skills or carry out their own projects on farms, are a big part of this level.

Where FFA Fits

"FFA is the vehicle that reinforces all this," says Thompson. Youngsters get valuable skills through participation in the FFA. They learn parliamentary procedure and public speaking, how to participate in or lead meetings and how to effectively express themselves.

Vo-ag teacher Roger Swartzendruber agrees. FFA contests build youngsters' assertiveness and confidence. Like vo-ag, FFA is poorly named for the times, he says. It's not just for future farmers.

Swartzendruber, age 25, came into the program the first year the new curriculum was in place. This is his third year at Vicksburg.

"I really like the curriculum here at Vicksburg," Roger said. "I think the basics are there and there's a lot to work from, especially for this area. There are probably places where the old-style emphasis on production agriculture is still appropriate. But most of the students here won't end up on farms."

Thompson is very well pleased with Roger. "The teacher still makes or breaks vo-ag programs," Bob says. He thinks Vicksburg was lucky. Poor agriculture programs at the high school level provide little good raw material to make future agriculture teacher, he figures. And, he says, MSU itself needs to revise its curriculum for training agriculture teachers, shifting away from the strong emphasis on production agriculture. But Roger was inspired by vocational agriculture and became an inspiring teacher.

The Vocational Problem

Thompson thinks that a key problem in vocational agriculture stems from its funding. At the state Department of Education level, federal money funnels in to help fund vocational programs of many kinds—cosmetology, welding, auto body repair, a dozen in all. To get this money, vocational programs are supposed to be vocational.

Is it at Vicksburg? Roger Swartzendruber says yes. But his is a "philosophical" yes. He thinks the program aligns students toward "the calling" of agriculture. They find their vocation in life from the program. And there is a lot of hands-on work. He doesn't believe, however, that his program turns out a finished farmer, ready to run a modern farm at the end of the twelfth grade.

Ready to Recruit

Thompson is proud of what his committee has done. Others on it include farmers Ray Vliek, Bob Harper, Mel Weinberg, former dairyman, and inventor Bill Oswalt (who now manufactures Dairy Herd Monitors and other products at Ozland Industries), John Foldesi with the Soil Conservation Service, Laurie Topper at ASCS, Gale Arent at Cooperative Extension Service, Mike Blough, the high school guidance counselor, and Ken Heikes, a part-time farmer and businessman.

"We think Vicksburg has the model curriculum for vocational agriculture for this state," Thompson said. "and I'll say that until I see one better and then we'll adopt that.

"We can serve kids and their needs now, and that's the bottom line, isn't it? We're ready to recruit."

Vicksburg is designated to handle all vocational agriculture students in Kalamazoo County. Of 65 now in vo-ag (up from 40 three years ago), only two students now come from other schools.

Thompson is county Farm Bureau president and the father of two pre-school daughters. With no direct interest, he's pushed hard to improve vo-ag programs, and ran for and was elected to the school board. Why?

Agriculture is my industry," says Robert Thompson. The professional look of his computerized office reflects his expectation of what vocational agriculture students should learn.

"Agriculture is my industry," he said. "No other industry this size does so little in public relations. And we pay for that every day in lack of understanding and appreciation." Agriculture and vocational agriculture schooling is not a dumping ground for low-caliber people.

Reprinted from Michigan Farmer, *March 19, 1988.*

The 1969 Washington Conference Program demonstrated FFA's continued commitment to leadership development.

FFA'S Fifth Decade

The fifth in a series of articles during FFA's 60th year.

By Wilson Carnes

As FFA approached its Golden Anniversary year, changes were taking place in the organization. Traditionally the FFA had been an organization of "farm boys" studying vocational agriculture in high school. But in the decade from 1968 to 1977, two major trends surfaced. One was the greater recognition of agribusiness in FFA programs and the other was the admission of girls to full membership in the organization.

For many years, FFA leaders recognized the fact that a significant number of FFA members were non-farm students of vocational agriculture. The vocational acts of 1963 gave considerable strength to this trend. FFA members had originally been students who lived on a farm or were preparing to enter upon the farm as a vocation. The new vocational acts authorized the use of vocational education funds to offer training to any student needing knowledge and skills in agriculture. These acts opened the door for students interested in agribusiness to enroll in vocational agriculture and join FFA.

Symbolizing this change was the creation of the Star Agribusiness awards in 1967. The first Star Agribusinessman of America award was presented at the National FFA Convention in 1969. New proficiency awards were also added to further reflect this trend to agribusiness. These included Agricultural Sales and/or Service, Floriculture, Nursery Operations, Outdoor Recreation, Placement in Agricultural Production and Turf and Landscape Management.

Perhaps one of the most controversial issues to ever come before the FFA was the admission of girls to full membership in the national organization. FFA members were divided on the issue. Some adult leaders thought the FFA Board of Directors should make the decision. Others felt that FFA is a democratic organization and the decision must come from the delegates to the National FFA Convention.

The delegates at the 1969 National FFA Convention voted to amend the FFA Constitution and make girls eligible for membership. Previously girls had been active only to the state level in some states. Almost immediately girls were accepted into the programs and activities of the FFA. In 1976, Julie Smiley of Mount Vernon, Washington, was elected national vice president of the Western Region, the first girl to serve as a national officer.

For years members and former members had been discussing the idea of an FFA alumni association. A major step was taken in 1969 when delegates to the National FFA Convention established the Alumni class of membership in the National FFA Constitution. A temporary executive council was appointed to make plans for the development of an FFA Alumni Association. On May 12, 1972, the organizational meeting was held in Chicago, Illinois, and the Alumni was in business as a support group for FFA.

Leadership training has been emphasized by FFA since the beginning of the organization. FFA leaders constantly sought new ways to involve more members in activities that would give them leadership experiences. The success of the State Presidents' Conference caused the FFA to extend the program to include chapter officers and FFA advisors. In 1969, the first Washington Conference Program for chapter officers was held in Washington, D. C. A special staff has been employed each summer to conduct the series of leadership meetings.

The First World Conference in Agricultural Education for Youth and Adult Leaders was held November 9-12, 1976, in conjunction with the National FFA Convention. The meeting included 243 persons from 28 countries.

As FFA closed out its first 50 years, members were involved in a variety of activities that extended from their local community to throughout the world. •••

Milestones

1969- First Star Agribusinessman of America awards presented.
-Washington Conference Program for chapter officers started.
-Delegates at national convention vote to admit girls to national membership.

1971- Administrative structure at the FFA Center reorganized into five divisions.
-Building Our American Communities (BOAC) launched.

1972- National FFA Alumni Association organized.

1974- President Ford's speech at National FFA Convention is carried on major television networks.

1975- Food For America program started.

1976- Alaska becomes 50th state association.
-FFA hosted the First World Conference in Agricultdural Education for Youth and Adult Leaders.
-Julie Smiley is first girl to be elected a National FFA Officer.

1977- Coleman Harris becomes National Executive Secretary.

The Dreamscape Architect

Ken Eriksen helps his customers' landscape dreams come true.

By Andrew Markwart

It all starts with a dream. Long before the bulldozers start pushing heaps of soil or the plants are ordered, Ken Eriksen of Puyallup, Washington, sits down with his clients and makes them dream of the perfect landscape for their home. He calls them "dreamscapes."

Ken's philosophy of the landscaping business goes beyond financial profits. He sees it as improving the quality of life for his customers. "A landscape is an extension of the home and the personality of the people living there," he explains, "it should help the home be a place to relax and enjoy life."

"I approach landscaping as an art, as sculpturing the top of the land," says Ken. "As a professional landscaper, I feel it's important to interview clients and ask what they are interested in, what their needs are, what family activities they do—what their lifestyle is. From there, my goal is to create a dreamscape for them."

This type of detailed research and a number of outstanding landscape projects helped the 19-year-old capture FFA's western region Turf and Landscape Management Proficiency Award in 1987. The award is sponsored by O.M. Scott & Sons as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

After Ken feels he understands his client's needs, he goes to work. "I take all of the personal information from our interview and start the designing stage. I spend about one-third of the total time I put into a project into the designing stage because a properly designed landscape will lead to a properly installed landscape which leads to a properly productive landscape."

Although he strongly believes in this style of customer service, Ken didn't originate the idea. It was taught to him by his agriculture advisor Pete Montson. Montson is head of the agriculture department and FFA advisor at John Rogers High School in Puyallup, Washington.

Montson believes that many landscapers concentrate on the technical aspect of their work while the personal side of the business is often overlooked. "So many people in landscaping and other areas of agriculture forget about that very important contact with their customers and developing that relationship. In our classes we develop interview questionnaires where students can go over with the customer fulfilling the customer's dreams.

"Landscaping is a lot more than just putting the right plants in place to make an area look pretty. It's dealing with the customer and being sensitive to them about their wants and desires," says Montson. "I get a lot of compliments from people in the community about Ken's personal contact with them."

Ken's career in landscaping began as a 10-year-old, mowing a lawn for an elderly neighbor. By the time he was 16, Ken was mowing 20 lawns every week and was starting to discover the elements that go into a good landscape.

On the Job

After finalizing plans with his customer, Ken prepares a site with stakes and other markers so the client, the excavators and he can see how the area will take shape. As he works on the project from day to day, Ken says attention to detail, such as cleaning up every night so people don't feel inconvenienced, is the mark of a true professional.

That attention to detail shouldn't end after the project is over, according to Ken. He offers a 90-day guarantee on all plant materials he installs. He also returns to the site once a week for the first month to make sure all the plant material is healthy and the client is pleased. He continues to visit twice a month for next six months to check the landscape.

The money Ken makes from his landscaping projects goes toward college, investing in his landscaping business and paying family bills. He saves what he can for the future.

That future may not be in the landscaping business. "Right now I'm contemplating between being a pastor or an agriculture teacher," says Ken. He sees an opportunity to work with young people in both careers, but wouldn't rule out keeping a hand in landscaping. "I can't get out of the business, I love it too much."

He is currently attending Green River Community College and would like to finish college at either Washington State University or Concordia Lutheran College in Missouri. ...

Ken Eriksen believes planning a landscape is the most important step in meeting the needs of his customers. *Photo by Author*

The kid said we ought to buy a new Chevy truck. I said there's still a few miles left in the old truck and to get back to work.

The kid said Chevy's got more standard power and a heavier frame in the half-ton than Ford, and the body's pretty near all two-sided galvanized steel now.

Said the Chevy's got more cab room than the Ford, and *Farm Industry News* named it a Top Product of the Year.

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Said I ought to at least look at the new Chevys. Know what? The kid just might amount to somethin' one of these days.

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There's always time at camp for fun activities, as demonstrated by these Wyoming and Montana "Junior Birdwatchers."

FFA Camps: The Natural Choice

Sure it's a chance to get away for a few days and sharpen some leadership skills, but there's so much more.

By Dr. Al Snyder and Court Schilt

While FFA members across the country spend their summers doing a variety of activities, one experience many of them have in common is summer camp.

Camps across the country vary greatly, but two things they all have in common are teaching about FFA and helping members develop leadership skills. The Wyoming FFA Leadership camp accomplishes those objectives and much more.

Members from 25 Wyoming and Montana FFA chapters attended the Wyoming FFA Leadership camp this past summer to help celebrate the camp's tenth anniversary. The camp is located in the Big Horn Mountains eight miles west of Buffalo, Wyoming. It is owned by the Wyoming Society for Crippled Children and Adults who have leased it to the FFA for eight of the last ten years. In exchange for the use of the facility, one afternoon is set aside from each session for building, repairing, cleaning and planting projects. This helps prepare the facility for the handicapped children and adults who attend camps of their own later in the summer.

For the first years at the camp, there were no dorms, so members set up and stayed in large army tents provided by the National Guard. Now that the camp has dorms and beds, it has lost some of the rustic atmosphere, but it has also lost the excitement of a sleeping bag full of ants.

The theme for the tenth anniversary celebration was "Celebration and Preparation." Members took time to reflect on the past ten years of the camp as well as set goals and dream about what the next ten years might bring. Tee-shirts hung from the ceiling of the pine mountain lodge with the pictures and themes of camps from previous years. A wood stove in the corner of the lodge hissed, crackled, and let out the faint smell of burning pine while it broke the chill of the fresh cool mountain air.

Rise 'n Shine 'n Shiver

There's not much need for a second breakfast call. If the smell of sizzling bacon, fresh hot biscuits and thick country gravy doesn't bring members running, the idea of hot chocolate or coffee after a cold dip in the icy cold mountain stream will. The camp facilities are not yet finished, so there is no hot water for showers.

Instead, everyone meets at the edge of the creek that carries the icy water just melted off the snow fields high above. There's no need for calisthentics after a wake-up like that! While a few hope the camp will soon have hot showers, most people look back and remember the icy cold water on hot summer afternoons as one of the camp's highlights.

No flag ceremony could be more inspirational than when FFA members from many different chapters stand together in official dress and raise Old Glory to her highest peak against the canyon walls and the wide Wyoming sky. These young people show pride in themselves, their organization and their country during the flag ceremony.

Members learned to appreciate their country even more this past summer as they visited with and got to know two WEA participants from overseas—Irek Majcher from Poland and Tanya Fleginghaus from Switzerland. By the end of the week, all language barriers had been broken and people from worlds apart became friends. Campers, counselors and our special guests had a new understanding not only of themselves, but of others who at first seemed so different. We all learned firsthand that some fears, hopes and dreams are universal.

Each summer, FFA members hold workshops outside under the old pines. Other small groups can be seen gathered in circles around rocks or sitting in flowery meadows. This setting provides a casual atmosphere for members to exchange ideas.

High above the camp, wedged between boulders at the top of a granite cliff, is a cross. It overlooks the canyon and valley below. Made by FFA members, the cross was placed on the skyline at the very first camp held in this canyon eight years ago. The canyon wall with the cross silhouetted against the setting sun serves as the backdrop for an evening of inspiration at the hillside vesper service. Some campers climb the side of the canyon one afternoon to look across hundreds of miles of spectacular colors and scenery just begging for a camera.

The flag raising ceremony is conducted with pride and sincerity. *Photos by Al Snyder*

FFA and Me

Wyoming FFA Leadership camp emphasizes personal development. Speakers and workshops have ranged from such a wide variety of topics as suicides, how to help friends in trouble, dealing with stress, helping the handicapped, how it feels to be left out and what the opposite sex laughs at in a date. Topics change from year to year to keep current with members' interests.

Of course, it wouldn't be an FFA camp without covering FFA topics. It is important to run an efficient meeting, and the basis of an efficient meeting is parliamentary procedure. At camp, members sharpen their parliamentary procedure skills, learn how to remember names, listen to the state officers tell about the duties of their offices, see what it takes to become a proficiency winner, learn how to fill out FFA applications, see what programs are new in the FFA and the list goes on.

In contrast to the frigid morning dip in the icy stream, each day comes to a close around the flames of the evening campfire. Singing group songs around the fire gives members the chance to unwind after a busy fun-filled day. It's a time to reflect on the day and talk with newfound friends. The memories of the campfire, the camp and special friends remain long after the embers of the fire have died away.

A fitting close for each session is the formal banquet held the last evening. Camp officers are elected the second day of camp and spend most of their spare time planning, organizing and preparing for this special event. The camp officers preside over the banquet and recognize the special talents of those in attendance and the generous contributions of all who help make such an occasion possible.

It is times such as these that counselors, junior counselors and state officers remember best why this camp, and indeed why the FFA is so important in developing young leaders for the industry of agriculture.

As a part of the tenth anniversary celebration, members placed a variety of items in a time capsule which was sealed and will be opened at the twentieth anniversary camp in ten years.

The camp is directed by Dr. Al Snyder who founded the camp ten years ago after serving two terms as a Wyoming state officer and by Court Schilt who attended camp for three years before being elected to a state office. Schilt will be returning for his fifth year as a counselor this coming summer. "I like to think of time in FFA and at camp as an investment," says Schilt. "The more you work toward the investment, the more interest you are likely to receive."

Making Friends

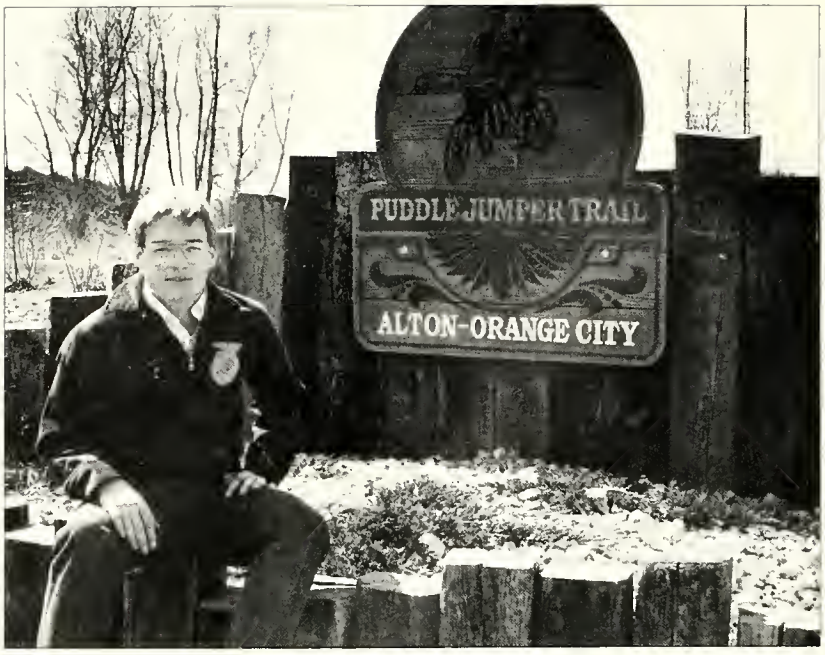
The most important things that members take from camp, however, doesn't come from the workshops, although they help develop it. It's not found along the creek or under the trees, although it starts there. It can't be learned from a book, although there are volumes written about it.

The most important thing about camp is the making of friends.

Going home realizing that whoever you are and wherever you're from, there are many, many others just like you. They are friends who will challenge, inspire, and motivate you to achieve the goals you have set for yourself, while at the same time you can help them do the same—side by side.

Whether an FFA member's goal is to be a farmer, horticulturalist, outdoor recreational engineer or national officer, the friends made in the FFA, the leadership skills developed and goals set will serve them well—and there's no place better than FFA camp to help make it all happen.

If your state has a leadership camp, check with your advisor or state officers to find out the details. Take the time to go to camp. It's truly a worthwhile adventure. •••



Ed Tullar, 1987-88 vice president of the Holland FFA Chapter, shows off one entrance to the Puddlejumper Trail.
Photos by Author

The Puddlejumper—From Trains to Training

The Holland, Iowa, FFA Chapter plays a major role in building a local physical fitness trail

By Mary Pat Finn

The rumble of a train is no longer heard on the three-mile stretch between the communities of Orange City and Alton in northwest Iowa.

Due to economics, the track was abandoned in 1980, the ties were removed several years later.

However, thanks to the efforts of more than 200 of the communities' residents, including 28 members of the Holland FFA Chapter in Orange City, a majority of the stretch between the two towns now bustles with activity year-round.

The historic railroad line was converted into the Puddlejumper Trail, a 2.4-mile nature and fitness trail enjoyed by hundreds of individuals of all ages.

Work on the Puddlejumper Trail project was the main thrust of the Holland FFA members for their Building Our American Communities (BOAC) project in 1986-87.

Holland Chapter members became involved in the project almost from the onset. An initial survey by the chapter of a cross-section of residents from both communities indicated the need for a safe recreational area, specifically a site that could be used by high school and college athletes for training purposes.

Chapter Advisor Bob DeHaan was among 21 members from the Orange City and Alton communities who served on the Puddlejumper Trail Development Committee which first met in November, 1984, after the Orange City Council purchased the property.

Buoyed by a $33,500 grant from the Iowa Conservation Commission (now the Iowa Department of Natural Resources), almost $9,700 was donated by area individuals, organizations and businesses. The Holland FFA Chapter assisted with the fund raising, donating $400 from its fruit sales. The grant stipulated that work on the Puddlejumper Trail be completed within one year.

The Holland FFA Chapter's contributions included construction of a 10' x 20' restroom facility, a 36' x 40' shelter house, 12 trash barrels and 18 benches. The FFA members also planted 400 trees along the trail and sowed eroded areas to native grasses.

DeHaan conservatively estimates that the 28 FFA members volunteered more than 700 hours of time to ensure completion of the project, saving the communities of Orange City and Alton approximately $3,500.

The FFA members' efforts were rewarded when the chapter emerged as the central region BOAC winner and then ranked second nationally in the 1987 competition sponsored by RJR Nabisco, Inc., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

The accomplishments were quite a feat for the Holland FFA Chapter which had not been involved with BOAC projects prior to 1981.

The positive exposure in the community gained through participation in BOAC projects "has helped us to develop a strong public backing," DeHaan said. "Today we have built a solid, growing chapter that we feel could not have been done without participation in BOAC."

DeHaan firmly believes that "participation in BOAC is what's kept vo-ag in the (Maurice-Orange City) school system. The community now comes to us with project ideas."

The Puddlejumper Trail project also paid rewards to the FFA members, DeHaan said, referring to the "leadership skills, confidence level, working with others and getting to know others in the community."

A Community Project

The role of residents in Orange City and Alton was a key to the success of the Puddlejumper Trail project.

"Community involvement and community support started right away and have continued right on to today," said John Buntsma, editor of the *Sioux County Capitol Democrat* weekly newspaper in Orange City who also was a member of the Puddlejumper Trail Development Committee. "The project received tremendous support from many organizations," he said.

Members Rob Groen, Randy Van Klompenburg and Kelly Bach chaired the chapter's BOAC committee in 1986-87. Bach, the chapter's Achievement in Volunteerism representative, emphasized that the Puddlejumper Trail was "a community effort—not just the FFA alone." He noted that although the majority of the work was done by the FFA chapter, "the project was a lot of fun. It got a lot of people (in both communities) involved who wouldn't have been involved otherwise."

It is estimated that the 205 individuals involved in the project, representing a number of organizations, donated almost 3,000 hours of labor.

Earl Woudstra, Orange City park and recreation director, praised the Holland FFA Chapter with the project.

"The Puddlejumper Trail Development Committee was made up of people with lots of great ideas but along the way, someone had to do the work. The FFA members carried out other people's ideas."

Iowa leads the nation in converted railroad trails, Woudstra said, adding that most of the trails are in eastern Iowa.

"Our (Puddlejumper) Trail is unique in that we've gotten input from the community," he said. "We're one of the first to have a completed trail development in this area." The Puddlejumper Trail is "an example of one of the things a community can do to improve the quality of life."

The Puddlejumper Trail, a 10-foot-wide path lined with crushed limestone, features a picnic area, ten fitness stations, markers designating each of the more than 225 different plants growing along the trail and a separate bridle path.

The trail is "an example of one of the things a community can do to improve the quality of life."

The trail received its name after the three-car train that traveled in the area from 1920 through the '40s, carrying passengers, mail and other cargo. It obtained its nickname because of its ability to pass through low-lying pools of water and still maintain its noted punctuality.

For one of its 1987-88 BOAC projects, Holland FFA members constructed two scenic overlooks on the trail which can be climbed to gain a better view of the area and of a buffalo herd grazing near the trail. They also built a piece of playground equipment, including a suspended bridge and overhead ladder.

"As the project was originally conceived, it's completed," Woudstra said. An ad hoc committee was formed to provide input for future development and improvements, he said. Trees and plantings will continue to be added, with areas developed for native grasses and flowers, Woudstra said.

A grand opening, complete with balloon launches, fitness demonstrations, picnics and nature hikes, was held at the site on June 6, 1987. About 500 people attended.

"I'm impressed with how use (of the trail) has continued to grow," Buntsma said. "On a Sunday afternoon, sometimes the trail is not wide enough." •••

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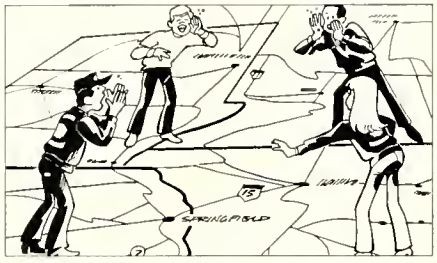
Chapter Scoop

After the tornado stormed through **Caldwell,** TX, area, the FFA pitched in to help pick up the pieces of homes, barns and other belongings.

Upper Sandusky, OH, tried a "Moms' Bakeoff" during FFA Week for cakes, either decorated or undecorated. Winners got $10 gift certificate.

Items donated by individuals and businesses sold for $1,500 at the **New Lexington,** OH, auction this spring. Highest seller was a weedeater.

DeWitt Central, IA, Alumni awarded five scholarships to deserving FFA seniors.



Members of **Hillsdale,** OH, FFA participated in a four-county speaking contest for the FFA Creed, Beginning Prepared, Senior Prepared and Extemporaneous divisions.

When a crew of members of **Elgin,** OH, Agri-Tech FFA took down the chapter's trophies to polish, they used the opportunity to carpet the wall and make it a better display for awards and plaques.

Highlights of the Chicago tour for junior/senior members of **Arlington,** OH, FFA were the calisthenics just prior to the opening of the Board of Trade, the view from the 106th floor of the Sears Tower, and the train ride to the city.

Forman FFA, **Manito,** IL, members planted thousands of pine seedlings, shrubs and prairie grasses to build up their wildlife project.

Treasurer of the **Christiana** FFA in Newark, DE, reports a successful new fund raiser is the new soda machine installed for student use after school.

Culver, OR, Chapter had a tractor wash to earn expense money to go to state convention.

Michael Armstrong of **Waterford,** OH, FFA took grand champion in potatoes at the state fair and won $1,800.

Genoa, OH, FFA and local supporters processed and packaged 22 hogs into sausage links, bulk sausage and ribs for the annual sale. Workers got free sausage patties cooked on the grill and a pot of hot bean soup was on all day.

Perham, MN, held a cherry pie social during FFA Week. Slides from national convention were shown.

Glide, OR, members collected canned and processed foods this spring as part of a Sharing the Harvest campaign. A different time of year to help the poor in the community with food needs.

Mansfield, TX, FFA members can buy FFA pens, bumper stickers or bookcovers from their advisor for 25 cents each during FFA Week.

Round Valley FFA livestock judging team from Springerville, AZ, won their first state contest.

Hoven, SD, FFA Alumni will sponsor a kids' wrestling tournament as a fund raiser.

Stonewall Jackson, VA, Chapter held an FFA Facts Quiz as the program for their March meeting.

Kuna, ID, held their annual Creed speaking contest and participants had to deliver the FFA Creed before a large audience.

Miller City, OH, FFA and FHA worked together to host a school dance.

Ginny Williams of **Oakland,** OR, took part in the district Creed speaking contest where contestants had to say the Creed by memory and then answer one question about it.

The new greenhouse being erected at **Chetopa,** KS, has been financed from the sale of vegetables grown in the hort department.

Wilmot, SD, FFA Week included a dress-up day, farmer day, maroon and white day and favorite rock star day.

Officer candidates of the **Southeastern-Ross** Chapter in OH had to submit applications and were interviewed by senior FFA members. Then the nominating committee selected the most qualified candidates for office.

Northwest Missouri Area Vo-Tech FFA awarded free lunches during school one day during FFA Week, plus held a drawing for free groceries sponsored by the chapter.

Rehobeth FFA in Dothan, AL, included the elementary students in their day-by-day events of FFA Week.

Highland, AZ, Chapter had ag trivia day.

Thomas, OK, members taught kindergarten through fifth grades about agriculture during the Week.

Many special newspaper sections are developed by chapters in cooperation with their local papers. Some we saw here at the editorial offices of the magazine were from **Douglas,** WY; **Manning,** IA; **Wetumpka,** AL; **Jetmore,** KS; and **East Bernard,** TX.

Bloomington, WI, offered cheese and crackers to the teachers during the Week and ice cream for all those who ate in school that day. They also had a question of the day contest and offered an FFA cap or shirt to the winners.

Don't let up during summer break. Keep those cards and letters coming in to the magazine. Fill up our files!

Best Foot Forward

It's amazing what putting on a blue and gold jacket will do.

By Dave Clarke, Regional Coordinator,
Kewanee Star-Courier

It's been a long time since I wore a blue FFA jacket, but the memories returned this week when I attended the Kewanee (Illinois) FFA Chapter awards banquet.

Educators have been trying lately to figure out where vocational agriculture fits into the scheme of public education.

Vo-ag departments are being cut and reduced around the country by administrators who see less value in such things because they feel that type of education can be gotten elsewhere.

But the fact of the matter is, what will be on our tables tomorrow depends on who decides on a career in agriculture today.

Beyond that, one of the most important things I learned through vo-ag and FFA had nothing to do with farming and is rarely taught in today's schools—respect.

It hasn't changed.

A young man, wearing an FFA jacket, opened the door for the guests and, in a quiet, polite manner, welcomed each one. Inside, each mother and girlfriend was presented with a long-stemmed rose by other students wearing FFA jackets, ties and black slacks or skirts.

It's hard to describe unless you've been there, but putting on that jacket, with the name of your school in big gold letters on the back and your name sewn in gold on the front, changes the person inside. It's a symbol of pride and accomplishment.

We never felt as though we had to act or be "cool," just be ourselves, work hard and respect others.

The four years I spent in (instructor) Jim Manthe's ag class at Wethersfield provided several life-forming memories.

I was proud then, and even more now, that my FFA jacket was handed down from Marshall Martin, an older Saxon kid, who was an outstanding student and is now professor of agriculture at Purdue University.

That jacket went through a lot.

In it, I experienced total, tongue-drying fear in my first attempt at public speaking.

I will never forget walking out onto the stage at Kewanee High School and being struck dumb by the vastness of space and brightness of lights. There were only about six people in the auditorium, one being the judge, Amron Buchanan. Mortified beyond belief, I tried to remember my speech on "The Joys of Being a Dairyman," or something like that, and finding only blankness where my mind used to be.

Buchanan finally yelled "Next!" and waved me off the stage. I vowed never to be embarrassed like that again. I gained confidence, learned to speak up—and haven't shut up since.

Parliamentary procedure contests were my first experience in tactical dealings with people and gave me some of that confidence. We took competition seriously and were the terrors of the Section III circuit.

Our blue jackets made us feel like behaving ourselves, most of the time, when we ventured to the state and national convention.

I will never forget the overwhelming feeling the first time I stepped into Assembly Hall in Champaign (on the campus of the University of Illinois), or the even larger Municipal Auditorium in Kansas City.

We were constantly told to set our goals and work to achieve them. We were also taught skills and attitudes that we wouldn't fully realize until later in life.

My shop project turned out to be the oddest-looking "A" frame hog house this side of the stockyards. It was almost tall enough to have an attic.

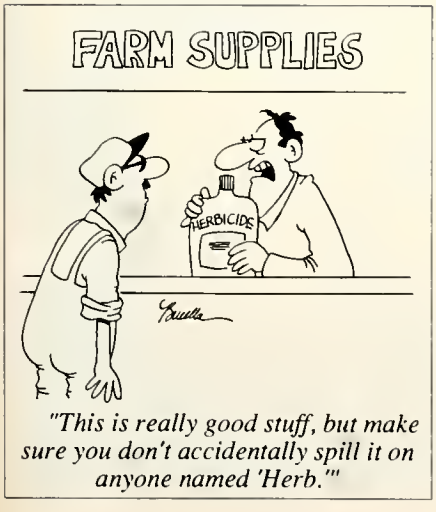
The point was not that it wasn't perfect, but that I had made it with my own hands and done something I had never done before.

It was a learning experience which is most important to someone at an early age.

Vocational agriculture and FFA offer an environment where students, no matter what their background, have worth and dignity.

It's amazing what putting on a blue and gold jacket will do. •••

Reprinted from the Kewanee Star-Courier.



"This is really good stuff, but make sure you don't accidentally spill it on anyone named 'Herb.'"

Time For A Change

A Missouri agriculture department uses computers to teach ag business, boost ag's image and increase enrollment

By Michael Wilson

The agriculture classroom at Clinton Area Vocational Technical School, Clinton, Missouri, looks something like Mission Control at NASA's Cape Kennedy. It's jammed full of personal computers—one on each desk, one for each student.

With 15 machines humming along in one ag classroom, the discussion often centers on computer chips rather than traditional subjects. The emphasis at Clinton is on business, marketing, sales and management, using agricultural examples.

Dan Wallace, agriculture instructor at Clinton, says the computers and high-tech emphasis were nonexistent three years ago. Unfortunately, his enrollment was almost nonexistent too.

"Numbers of students were declining rapidly in my traditional livestock and crop classes," says Wallace.

Then Wallace decided to revamp his teaching approach. He began to teach agriculture emphasizing business, marketing and management.

He brought in ten personal computers and started up two new classes—Ag Business Sales and Economics, and Ag Business Management and Marketing. The two classes rotate each semester.

The new approach worked. "We've increased the size of our lab from the original 10 computers to 15 computers because of the demand for these classes," says Wallace. "We were at 27 students three years ago, and now we have 44 students in the agriculture program." Chances are good his enrollment will nearly double again next year.

"I get a lot of students that have never been in the traditional ag classes who sign up as juniors or seniors," he says. "That's because they're interested in learning about business, marketing and computer technology. Some end up interested in agriculture, too."

Non-traditional

Darren Kinsey, 17, is one of those non-traditional students in Wallace's classes. "I really didn't get into the class for the farming," he admits. "I wanted to get some use on the IBMs because I'd never used them before."

Kinsey's friends told him about the Ag Business classes. He knew the courses were about agriculture, but he also figured that many of the skills taught in class, like using electronic spreadsheets and word processing, were things everyone could utilize no matter what profession they went into.

Wallace admits this was an end-around approach, using computers to get students interested in agriculture. But, he adds, "I teach agriculture as a business, and any business training I do with the computers, even with an ag approach, can be applied to other businesses."

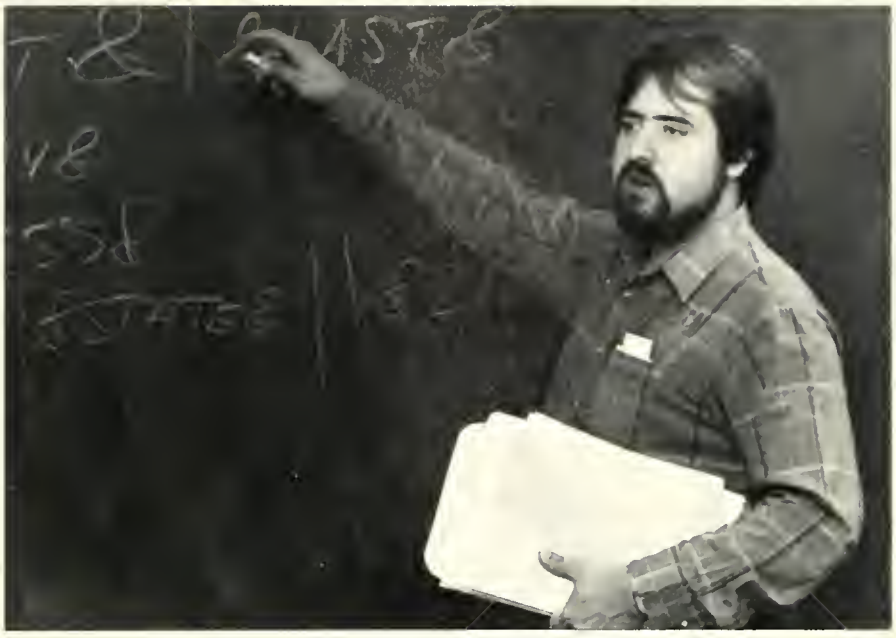
Clinton's computerized classes are drawing students from nearby schools. Shannon Simpson, Ballard, Missouri, drives 50 miles every day to attend classes at Clinton. Her own high school doesn't offer agriculture classes or FFA.

Simpson, a senior, is enrolled in three classes at Clinton; Animal Science, Ag Business, and a special projects course where she works at a veterinary clinic. She hopes to go into veterinary medicine someday after college.

"I've really enjoyed it. I've been able to do a lot of things and meet a lot of people," says Simpson. She received

Shannon Simpson drives 50 miles every day to attend classes at Clinton AVTS.

"I teach agriculture as a business, and any business training I do with the computers, even with an ag approach, can be applied to other businesses."
—Dan Wallace



Agriculture instructor Dan Wallace is using computers to help students better understand management and marketing decision making. *Photos by Author*

permission to attend Clinton AVTS because of the specialized course work. She drives herself because her classes are held in the morning, not in the afternoon when Ballard routinely buses students to Clinton.

"I'd had biology classes, but not anything related to farm management and the things we're learning in the computer class," she says.

"Big on the farm"

"The main reason I decided to take the computer class is that computers are becoming very big on the farm," says Simpson. "I think it's going to be very important to learn in the future."

Convinced of its value as a business tool, Simpson hopes to talk her parents into getting a computer for the family farm.

"We're learning things in class that are farm oriented, but anyone can use these computer skills," she says. "We study management and marketing. We created a financial statement, balance sheet, cash flow statement, a data base and work on word processing.

Simpson had already taken one computer class at Ballard. But it was mostly programming. The Clinton courses offer more practical, hands-on training. Wallace makes sure students learn on their own. "He helps us if we need help, but for the most part he lets us work it out on our own," Simpson says.

Kinsey, too, expects he'll use his computer skills no matter what career path he follows. He says at least half of the students in his class enrolled in the course to get the computer experience.

But along the way, Kinsey discovered that agriculture is a more interesting field than he earlier realized.

"I never associated farming with using computers or spreadsheets before," Kinsey says. "I can see how using the computer may attract people like myself toward an interest in agriculture."

Production agriculture training has not been abandoned, but Wallace figures since business has been added to the curriculum, students need training on business tools, namely computers. Nationwide, a survey of state agriculture education departments discovered that over two-thirds of all vocational agriculture classrooms now have a computer available.

At Clinton, students can take part in a simulated commodity trading game. With the help of a modem and phone, they get instant updates on commodity prices—another lesson that shows farmers can and do use computers as a business tool.

That's helpful to students like Michael Parks, who owns his own IBM computer and plans to become a part-time farmer. "Someday farmers will be using computers for lots of things," he says.

"The FFA isn't just for farmers," adds Parks, chapter president. "There are a lot of careers in agriculture. Almost any field can be related back to agriculture."

Local impact

Clinton students get hands-on experience in some of those career fields. Wallace's students are expected to search out financial and record keeping problems presented by local agribusiness people.

"That way the students get some practical experience," says Wallace. "They go out and work with these business people and see what kind of problems they're having, look for ways computers may solve that problem, and report their solutions back to the business."

Wallace's high-tech teaching approach is also paying off in some positive public relations for the school. "It shows agribusiness people that the local ag instructor is not just teaching production agriculture, we've also gotten into technology," he says.

Future expansion

The turnaround in enrollment means Clinton will expand to a two-teacher department next year. "The demand for this ag business computer class is so large we're doubling our offering to two courses in the same year," says Wallace. "We have 30 students already signed up for those two classes. By next year our preliminary enrollment will have gone from 44 to 70 or 75 students in the total ag program."

Clinton is adding a computer-aided design and drafting course, and Wallace hopes to utilize the new batch of computers in landscape, horticulture and agricultural mechanics classes.

"We hope to have access to 25 computers within the building," he says. "Fifteen in the ag classroom, and ten in the computer-aided design classroom."

Best of all, the new computer-oriented classes are gaining interest among adults. The addition of another teacher will enable Wallace to work half-days next year teaching adults the same computer technology and ag business principles their children are learning. •••

Stars on Tour

(Continued from page 15)

their agricultural commodities, but at the attitude of the Europeans toward the subsidies. "Europeans place a high value on keeping farmers on the land, said Simmons. "If that means subsidizing small, inefficient producers at high levels, then that's the price they're willing to pay. U.S. farmers don't, as a percentage of production, receive as much in subsidies mainly because the American public does not place as high a value on keeping farmers on the land as do the Europeans."

Commodity representatives from the EC met with the FFA Star Farmers and Agribusinessmen at EC Commission headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. Topics of discussion included a comparison of U.S. and European subsidies for producers, formulation of agricultural policy within the EC, and opportunities for cooperation between the U.S. and the EC in upcoming trade talks. The EC officials stated firmly that international agricultural markets were open for competition and that the EC would continue to support the European agricultural industry.

While in Paris, the stars met with Joe Rodgers, U.S. Ambassador to France, and with staff from the embassy's agricultural office. Lilly France S.A., Elanco's French subsidiary, hosted a dinner for the stars and Mr. Jean-Paul Rohmer of Lilly led a discussion of European agricultural economics contrasting it with the U.S. system.

The FFA members who participated in the international travel seminar were Star Farmer of America Franklin Howey Jr., 21, Monroe, North Carolina; western region star farmer Lyle Blakley, 21, Oologah, Oklahoma; central region star farmer Michael Porter, 21, Fennimore, Wisconsin; southern region star farmer Barry McWilliams, 21, Halls, Tennessee; Star Agribusinessman of America Daniel Ruehling, 21, Belle Plaine, Minnesota; western region star agribusinessman Scott Standridge, 20, Lindsay, Oklahoma; eastern region star agribusinessman Jeffrey Simmons, 20, Penn Yan, New York; and southern region star agribusinessman Phillip Willis, 21, Philadelphia, Mississippi. In addition, two of the stars' spouses accompanied them on the tour. The spouses who participated in the tour were Nancy Porter of Fennimore, Wisconsin, and Rae Blakley of Oologah, Oklahoma. •••

European Community

(Continued from Page 15)

exports were purchased by the EC, while about 22 percent of all EC exports went to the United States.

In 1979, the EC took a new step toward economic and monetary unity by implementing the European Monetary System (EMS). The EMS is similar in function to the U.S. Treasury Department. This system provides for frequent discussions among central bankers and for activity in foreign exchange markets to maintain the value of each EC currency within a narrow range in relation to all other currencies.

The European Currency Unit (ECU) is a unit of currency used as a reference point against which to compare other currencies, such as the U.S. dollar or the Japanese yen. However, instead of being limited to representing one country's currency, the ECU is a "basket" of member currencies with each currency being weighted for its strength on the world financial market. The ECU is an accounting unit which provides a common denominator; there is no actual physical currency. •••

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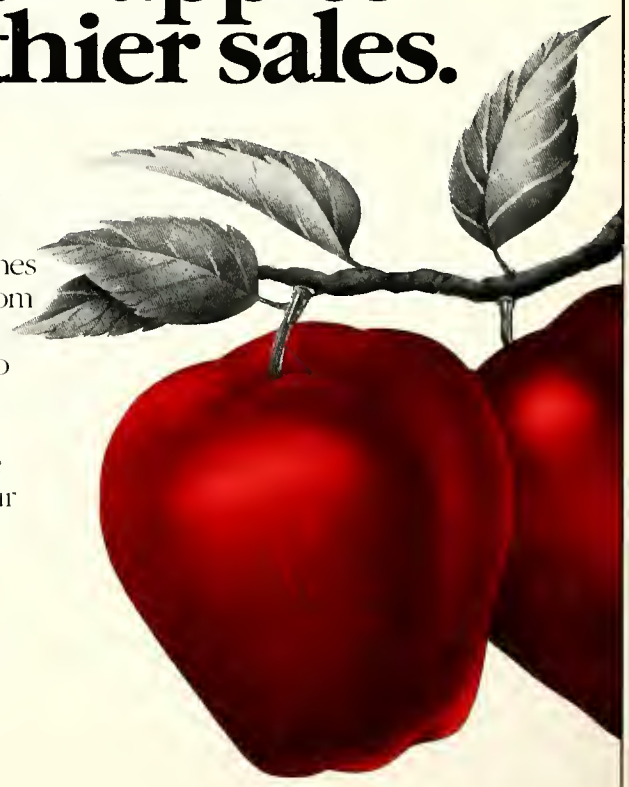

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Over 3,500 new winners this year

DEKALB Award Recognizes Achievement

Awards signify achievement. Without it, honors easily won are easily forgotten.

Consider the DEKALB Agricultural Accomplishment Award, sponsored by DEKALB-PFIZER GENETICS. Since 1947, more than 115,000 senior vo-ag students have earned it by exhibiting the highest degree of agricultural proficiency among their classmates. This spring more than 3,500 new winners were named in high schools across the country.

"The recipients are young leaders who represent the best in agriculture," notes DEKALB-PFIZER GENETICS President Kent Schulze. "We consider our sponsorship to be an investment in the future of the industry."

Each year at Benton Central High School, numerous seniors apply for the award, which is a highly visible sign of achievement among the student body. Many of the seniors who apply have had their sights on the award since starting high school, according to FFA Advisor Dale Butcher. "It's quite an honor to receive," notes Butcher of Oxford, Indiana. "We make quite a production out of the award at the FFA banquet in spring."

But the award accomplishes more than providing recognition for one outstanding senior. Butcher merchandizes it to spark younger students' interest in FFA and to increase public awareness of the organization. "We put together a slide presentation on our top award winners to show young students what the older ones have accomplished," he explains. "We also publish a press release on the winner."

Like Butcher, Jack Simmerman says his agriculture students consider the DEKALB Award one of the most prestigious to receive. "That and the Star Chapter Farmer award are the highlights of many FFA careers," states Simmerman, the agriculture instructor and FFA advisor at Owen Valley High School, Spencer, Indiana. "When we present one, we want the recipients to feel that they have made an achievement, and we want other students to be encouraged to aim for the same success."

In addition to the criteria prescribed by DEKALB-PFIZER, selection at Owen Valley is based largely on community activities and project work. Projects for the school's 103-member FFA chapter include being a voting member of the Spencer Chamber of Commerce, operating a tree-planting service—the chapter's members have planted as many as 50,000 trees in one year in a reforestation program—and providing a rabies vaccination clinic for pet owners in Owen County.

The Owen Valley Chapter emphasizes that FFA provides young people with management abilities and skills that can be applied in any career, agricultural or otherwise. "It gives you a broad opportunity base," he points out.

David Vaughn, a former student of Simmerman's, received the DEKALB Agricultural Accomplishment Award in 1976. The same leadership and management skills that helped him earn the award have, more importantly, enabled him to attain his career objective of farming.

For the past five years, Vaughn has been employed by a farmer in the Spencer area. Vaughn's goal since the start—approved and encouraged by his boss—was to start his own operation. In January, 1987, Vaughn launched out on his own with a diversified row-crop and livestock operation. "I'm in a do-or-die situation," he says. "But I know that this is what I want for myself and my family."

Jayme Feary, Falkville, Alabama, says he concentrated on doing his best and learning as much as possible from his FFA projects. The result was that Feary, the 1987 National FFA Vice President, southern region, received the DEKALB Agricultural Accomplishment Award in 1984.

Feary's accomplishments are noteworthy when you consider that he didn't think he wanted to be involved in high school agriculture or FFA. Encouragement from his grandparents and his advisor, Billy Bryan, convinced Feary to give both a try.

The ensuing years of involvement, particularly in FFA, helped set his career direction. As a junior at Auburn University, Feary is majoring in agricultural business and economics and plans for a career in business or education.

"I know that sometimes the things you do through FFA, like public speaking or judging at a contest, may seem insignificant at the time, but they add up," says Feary. "It's those kinds of things that help you build a strong foundation for the future." •••

FFA In Action

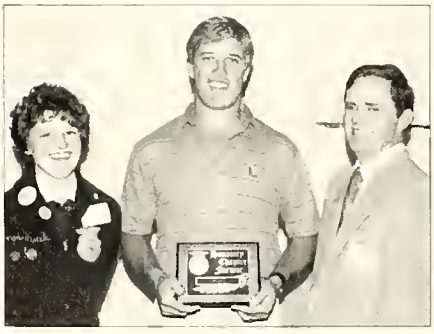
Photo by Carol Bardin

Blue Corduroy Vests Proposed

The Pinedale, Wyoming, FFA Chapter and FFA Alumni made a proposal at the state convention in Cheyenne, April 10-12, to consider FFA vests for wear by the Wyoming Association. The vests are made with similar corduroy of the same color as the official FFA jacket. Because of its light weight and comfort, the chapter is hoping it will become popular during the summer months and in the show ring. The vests were designed by the chapter and originally made by a mother of one of the members. ***(Tomi Sue Bousman, President)***

John Elway Named Honorary Chapter Farmer

John Elway, quarterback for the Denver Broncos, was made an honorary member of the Melba, Idaho, Chapter. Dave Daniel, chapter advisor, and Angela Tlucek were in Denver to accept a $2,000 scholarship for the FFA chapter at Melba High School. The fund was established in memory of those who died in the November crash in Denver.



Angela Tlucek and Advisor Dave Daniel presented Denver Bronco quarterback John Elway an Honorary Chapter Farmer plaque on behalf of the Melba FFA.

"The Elway Report" was presented live on KNUS each Wednesday during football season. John gave listeners a behind-the-scenes look at the Denver Broncos. At the end of each week John donated $500 to a cause or person of his choice. These contributions were made possible by Western Dairyfarmers' Promotion Association.

State Lilac Award

The Coe-Brown, New Hampshire, Academy FFA was honored during ceremonies held at the state capital in February for work with the governor's Lilac Commission.

In an official commendation, Governor John Sununu recognized Coe-Brown FFA's efforts in growing, distributing and planting New Hampshire's official state flower, the purple lilac. The commendation cited Coe-Brown for "its efforts on behalf of the purple lilac and for preserving a part of New Hampshire's history for our citizens today and for future generations to come."

During the past two years Coe-Brown FFA has grown and planted several hundred lilacs in the community including a bed at the Northwood Town Hall, a large planting along Rouge 4 in Epson and multiple plantings on the grounds of Coe-Brown Northwood Academy. Many other plants were grown from rooted cuttings and distributed to school and community members.

Brothers Bag Corn State Championship

Gary and Mike Smith farm together with their father Tommy in northern Kentucky between Louisville and Evansville, Indiana, and are members of the Breckenridge County FFA Chapter. They are also the 1987 state corn champions.

The contest was close this year. Mike and Gary's yield of 208.32 bushels per acre with Pioneer brand hybrid 3165, edged out the second place winner by less than 1/4 bushel. It is a little unusual for the winners to be high school students.

Mike, who will graduate this year, hopes to earn the diversified crop proficiency award. He wants to farm in the future, but will first attend Western Kentucky University to major in ag mechanization and ag business.

Gary, 16 and a junior, wants to follow his brother's lead toward recognition for his enterprises with the State and American Farmer degrees.

Mike and Gary share 33 acres of corn, 10 acres of hay and 2 acres of tobacco. Beef cattle are also included in their operation. Their vo-ag instructors are Pat Henderson, Leon Smiley and Ron Gibson.

As with other farmers, Mike and Gary try new products and practices when it looks like they can improve their operation. They use no-till to conserve moisture and soil on their farm.

The formula and schedule they used was: Initial application of 100-100-100; Planting population 25,000 with a harvest population of 22,000; Applied 200 pounds of 6-24-24 beside the row; Fol-

lowed with a side-dressing of 50 pounds of nitrogen when corn was knee-high and then at shoulder-height.

Although they won the contest, during the year they weren't completely confident that they would have a very good harvest.

"Most of the year we thought we were

Gary and Mike Smith produced 208.32 bushels an acre to take the state title.

having troubles. You could see strips through the field that at times didn't look real promising for a good yield," Gary said.

State Association Pride

The Vermont Association was one of 11 state awardees of a 1987 Take Pride in America and Vermont award.

The Take Pride awards are to recognize individuals, organizations, agencies and businesses which make outstanding contributions to encourage better use of public lands and resources.

The Vermont FFA initiated and coordinated the 24-ton cleanup of an area off Route 127 on the Winooski River in Colchester, Vermont. The site will be developed into a fishing access during the summer of 1988.

Awards were presented by Governor Madeleine Kunin.

Pork Bowl Classic

A very knowledgeable Memphis, Missouri, FFA team claimed the championship and $300 top prize in the Missouri Pork Quiz Bowl. Memphis knocked off teams from Shelby County 4-H and Northwestern FFA before beating a tough Monroe County 4-H team in the final round of competition. Winning team members were Kent Montgomery, Hamie Triplett, Mike Cole, Daryn Triplett, Laverne Isringhausen and Gerald Frederick. They were coached by Bill Cottrell.

The quiz bowl was a new youth event introduced at the annual Missouri pork conference. Teams of four members competed against each other and the clock, with points awarded for each correctly answered question. Subject matter covered included production, economics, human and animal health and nutrition, state and national organizations and trivia.

Trade Talk

The Silex, Missouri, Chapter had a chance to experience foreign relations in agriculture firsthand when they attended a press conference held by Mr. John MacGregor, British Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. The press conference was held at the home of Joe and Melba Paulsmeyer.

Joe and Melba Paulsmeyer operate a 1,150-acre grain and livestock farm in Lincoln County, near Silex, northwest of St. Louis.

The Paulsmeyer farm contains a farrow-to-finish hog operation, from which the Paulsmeyers market between 500 and 1,000 hogs per year. Each year approximately 300 acres of corn, which averages about 125 bushels per acre; 400 acres of soybeans, averaging about 35 bushels an acre; and about 300 acres of wheat, which averages about 50 bushels an acre are raised.

The Paulsmeyers have three children: Mrs. Carmen Ellis, who is employed with the local soil conservation service; Carol, an undergraduate in secondary education at the University of Missouri; and Glen, an undergraduate in food science and nutrition at the University of Missouri.

Mr. Paulsmeyer is a past vocational agriculture teacher and county Farm Bureau president.

Glen was an FFA member and received his State Farmer degree in 1987.

Peter C. Myers, deputy secretary of Agriculture and Charles Kruse, Missouri Agricultural Director accompanied Mr. MacGregor on his trip to the Paulsmeyer farm. The Paulsmeyer farm was one of Mr. MacGregor's first stops on his tour of the midwestern United States.

The purpose of his tour was to meet not only with policy makers and officials, but to meet with local farmers and learn their opinions about current agricultural policies. He wished to make contact with a wide range of those people involved in American agriculture.

One of the more popular topics of discussion for Mr. MacGregor was the current set-aside program being implemented in the U.S. under the ASCS offices of the Department of Agriculture. A similar plan is being introduced in Great Britain. It was of great interest to Mr. MacGregor to hear firsthand from area farmers on how the program is faring in the U.S.

Mr. MacGregor was particularly interested in the link between the set-aside program and environmental issues. In the U.S., the program is appealing because it cuts down on the amount of erosion. Erosion problems in Great Britain are not as high a priority however, and the British are more concerned with preserving the variety of their wildlife and the aesthetic qualities of their land.

Following his address to the press, Mr. MacGregor had a chance to talk briefly with members of the Silex FFA Chapter. John Finnerty, president, and Robbie Dameron, sentinel, answered Mr. MacGregor's questions about the origin and purpose of FFA.

Quilt Money

The North Dakota FFA Foundation was the beneficiary of a unique gift this year, thanks to a patient and talented mother, appreciative of what FFA had done for her two sons.

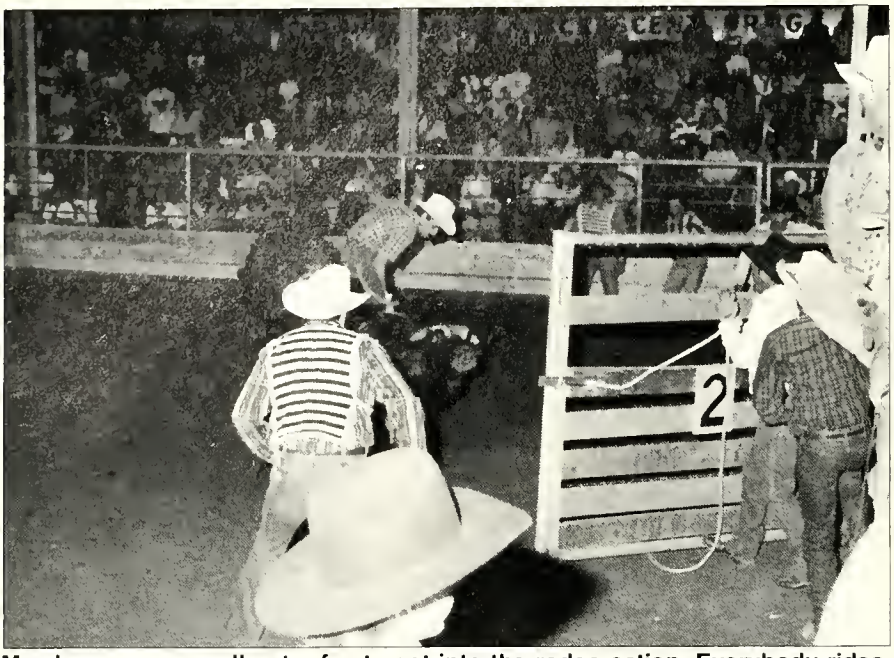
Mrs. Larry Crabbe of Barton, North Dakota, made a full-size FFA quilt, complete with a detailed and full-color FFA emblem on a gold background bordered by strips of white and blue.

When the quilt was completed in early 1987, she donated the work of art to the Rugby Chapter. Thinking the quilt too beautiful to keep to themselves, the Rugby Chapter organized a statewise raffle.

Half of the proceeds from ticket sales were forwarded to the North Dakota FFA Foundation, while local chapters retained the remaining half. While tickets were being distributed, the quilt was displayed at the state convention and the state fair.

The winning ticket was drawn at the 1988 State FFA Greenhand Leadership Conference in January for Carol Connole, a farm homemaker from Mohall. *(Bill Acre, Reporter)*

FFA In Action



Members pay a small entry fee to get into the rodeo action. Everybody rides, ropes or works to make this large rodeo a success.

Ride 'em Rodeo

The Hope, Arkansas, FFA Rodeo is one of the oldest rodeos in the state and is unique in that only FFA members can participate in it.

This year will be the 29th rodeo. We have a large chapter of about 270 members, 100 of which usually help by selling tickets to the rodeo or by working in the concession stand.

Why do we have this rodeo? Naturally, the money we make is the main reason, but community involvement is another important reason. The week of the rodeo we have a parade downtown and sponsor Western Day at all three Hope elementary schools where the students dress up in Western clothes. The students judged to have the best outfits receive free rodeo tickets and cash prizes.

A few years ago we added Old Timers' Night which involved alumni members. They must be honorary members or have been out of high school for at least five years to enter the rodeo. The four events for our old timers include roping, team-roping, chute-dogging and wild cow milking. Old Timers' Night is on Thursday, the same day that we have all the "Little Britches" contestants try out for the Friday and Saturday events.

Little Britches is an event for younger boys and girls. They have to get onto a small calf and hold onto it with their hands for six seconds.

Our regular rodeo events include bull-riding, calf-roping, bareback riding, wild cow milking, barrel-racing, goat-tying and the pig-scramble for the grade-schoolers.

The average attendance is about 6,000 for the three-day rodeo and we make around $4-5,000 profit. The money is used for chapter supplies, banquets and conference and leadership expenses.

Although we are self-supported, some of the area businesses sometimes donate money for prize money for the winners of some of the events. Also, several businesses pay for the belt trophy-buckles which are awarded to the first, second and third place winners in each of the regular events. The All-around Cowboy and All-around Cowgirl receive nice prizes from businesses as well.

To compete in our rodeo, you must be a Hope FFA member, have paid your dues and have paid a $3 entry fee per event. *(Robert Parker, Jr. Advisor)*

The hard job is still "holdin' on" and making it to the bell in order to collect the buckle.

Volunteer Teachers

The Logan, New Mexico, FFA Chapter has developed a literacy program for their community offering free tutoring in adult basic education.

Seventeen members of the FFA and their instructor have finished two-day training sessions to become Literacy Volunteers. In cooperation with the Learning Center at Tucumcari Area Vocational School, Lita Sena and Cathey Hockett traveled on two separate occasions to the Logan ag shop to give the workshops.

These workshops were designed to teach volunteers how to teach someone else to read. Besides teaching people to read, some members will help those who are trying to attain their GEDs (Graduate Equivalent Diploma).

The FFA members will soon be certified trainers and receive their certificates making them Literacy Volunteers of America members.

That organization was founded in 1962 in Syracuse, New York, with the original purpose of working to combat the problem of illiteracy in one community. Last year, 15,000 volunteers tutored 17,000 functionally illiterate adults and teens.

This newly started program is one of the BOAC projects the Logan FFA does each year. *(Frank Fort, Reporter)*

Hitting the Slopes

On March 11, 1988, 34 members and friends of the Dodge City, Kansas, FFA Chapter headed for the Colorado ski slopes. Members sold 1,000 pounds of peanuts and 5,000 pounds of popping corn to finance the trip. The group enjoyed two good days of skiing at the Monarch Ski Area.

An interesting sidelight of the trip was when the members found out their bus driver, Jerry Stinger, was a former FFA members from Fairmont, Indiana. He also told the group about his classmate and fellow FFA'er, Jim Davis, who used to doddle in class and draw pictures of his teachers. Today, Jim Davis draws a syndicated cartoon character Garfield. *(Raymond Slattery, Vice President)*

Farm TV Stars

Eight FFA chapters in northeast Indiana participated in the 15th annual WKJG-TV Kindergarten Farm Tour in May near Fort Wayne. Each year the event hosts 4,000 youngsters.

Using the Wilmer Rodenbeck farm, FFA members bring in livestock and displays and operate 11 "learning stations" helping the urban youngsters understand there's more to the food story than the supermarket.

The on-the-farm tours for 4,000 youngsters demands a solid organizational plan and hard work.

FFA members take a leadership role in coordinating school bus arrivals and assignment of guides. They also ensure that the agriculture story is told with pride. They often must explain things like the connection between grains and breakfast cereal, answer questions about the age and weight of the animals and let the kids pet the animals.

FFA chapters participating include Carroll, Churubusco, Columbia City, East Noble, Eastside, Heritage, Whitko and Woodlan. FHA chapters from three schools also assist. The event is coordinated by Dick Florea of WKJG-TV who includes a "live" telecast from the tour on his "Editor's Desk" interview show.

State Officers Reunite in South Dakota

For many state FFA associations, 1988 marks the year of their 60th anniversary. The South Dakota association celebrated its anniversary during their state convention under the theme "Proud of Our Past— Preparing for the Future," held April 10-12, on the campus of South Dakota State University.

One of the main events on the convention's schedule was a reunion of all past state officers on April 11. Over 100 past officers and their spouses attended a special convention session, banquet and a social hour where they exchanged stories with other state officer teams and talked about recent activities in their local FFA chapters.

A popular theme that ran through discussions was how their state officer leadership experience helped in advancing their careers. The former state officers reported employment in a wide range of careers areas, including: high school and university teaching, research, banking, veterinary science, news and farm broadcasting, engineering and association-related careers.

The Day the Governor Came to Town

The first day of spring break was a busy one for Bridgeport, Alabama, FFA members Jimmy Lawhenore, Mark Baker, Kevin Blizard and David Hughes. Governor Hunt came to a ribbon cutting ceremony for a state-of-the-arts carpet fiber plant being built in Bridgeport. After a short ceremony at the plant site, the governor along with plant officials and townspeople crowded into the high school auditorium for more ceremonies.

The FFA members helped as ushers, showing dignitaries to their reserved sections and assisting in any way possible. Following the ceremonies in the auditorium, lunch was served in the gymnasium. After lunch the FFA members were able to meet Governor Hunt and have their picture made with him. Governor Hunt told the FFA'ers of his days as an FFA member and chapter president, and when he received his State Farmer degree.

Pictured with Governor Hunt, from the left, are Kevin Blizard, David Hughes, Jimmy Lawhenore and Mark Baker.

FFA Cleans Up Downed Trees

Shortly after a bad March ice storm, FFA members of Zanesville, Ohio, were on the scene assisting the highway department in cleaning fallen trees and limbs from the roads. This service project was taken on by our chapter's emergency response team (ERT). The ERT is part of our BOAC program.

Recording Farm History

A few members of the Meridian, Idaho, BOAC Committee have been working with the Meridian Historical Society to survey and inventory historic farmsteads in the Meridian area. We have been visiting properties of people who came into the area around 1900 or before and we are recording their histories on film. We have also made some oral history tapes.

These surveys have a practical application even today as we study economic trends and development projects that can put pressure on early settlement areas.

The visits with early area farmers telling it like it "used to be" has been very interesting and educational to the FFA's chapter BOAC members who are participating in this survey.

Seeds for Success

About 1 1/2-hours from Sacramento, California, nestled in the Sierras, is Pliocene Ridge High School. With a student enrollment of only 18, it is one of the smallest high schools in the nation. Yet, smallness is not preventing these students from successfully meeting the challenges of some very large agricultural science projects this school year.

(Continued on Page 38)

FFA In Action

(Continued from Page 37)

In an effort to provide students with the background for higher education, as well as marketable job skills, the school provides course work in agricultural business management, horticulture, agricultural mechanics and agricultural economics. Additionally, students are involved in SOE programs.

This year the FFA chapter produced a video about Pliocene for their sister school The Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences. They also worked during their Thanksgiving and Christmas vacations to construct their school's horticultural facilities.

As a result of their drive for seed and equipment donations, the students have been the fortunate recipients of items from all over the United States, Canada and even Nationalist China. For example, strawberries are being grown in vertical towers inside their greenhouse. This project utilizes technology developed in Portugal for high density planting and high yield of soft fruit. Eggplant varieties that have never been previously grown in the United States have been started from oriental seeds.

A Jefferson commemorative flower garden will be planted from seeds obtained through the "Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants." Two hundred donated rose bushes are being planted to adorn the horticultural site for the school and local community. And plans are underway to test seeds for the Vermont Bean Seed Company.

Most recently, the members have embarked on another project. They received a "Bulk Seed Grant" from the board of trustees of The America the Beautiful Foundation in Washington, D.C. Having secured a large plot of land, the students are now attempting to obtain donations of irrigation line and use of a tractor and equipment so that they can grow vegetables for the hungry, elderly and confined. *(Jennifer DeRaps, Secretary)*

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Green Medalists

Each year since 1981 the National Gardening Association has recognized the ten best youth gardening programs in the county with a grant.

This year they have added a new recognition program for those programs that have won a grant and are still successful ongoing programs. It's called a Green Medal Award.

The FFA vo-ag program at Apopka Memorial Middle School in Florida was chosen to be a Green Medalist.

Advisor John Cloran first applied for recognition after seeing entry details in the FFA's *BETWEEN ISSUES* newsletter for advisors.

The chapter was given seeds, gardening equipment and lesson materials. In total, over $4,000 worth of equipment and supplies have been sent to the vo-ag department.

Basically, the FFA has made this a Food for America project teaching gardening at five elementary schools in their area. The 200 chapter members work side-by-side with the 600 younger children, taking them through the planting process, showing them films and videos about good nutrition, even providing them with an incubator for an egg-hatching project.

Pet Clinic

During the fall, the Mansfield, Texas, Chapter, in cooperation with several local businesses, veterinarians and the city Animal Control Department, conducted a rabies vaccine clinic for pets and pet owners in the community. Over 150 dogs and cats were vaccinated. Dogs were also dipped for flea and tick control. Dr. Robert Hart, a local veterinarian, checks one of the animals as he gives a checkup. *(From National Chapter Award application)*

Sign of Success

The Montgomery County, Kentucky, FFA succeeded in getting a new FFA sign added at the entrance to the community. New FFA signs were put up along all county roads during FFA Week. Left to right are, Craig Davis, Larry Davis and Chuck Sorrell. *(Teresa Bailey, Reporter)*

My Turn

with

Terri Lynn Hames

As I write this column, I am sitting in Denver International Airport waiting on a connecting flight to Oklahoma City for the Easter holiday. Homeward-bound, I am casually dressed in 501 Levi's, a rugby shirt and high-top Reeboks. As I slurp on a Diet Coke and watch people pass, I notice we share similar interests in clothing, shoes, luggage and purses.

My thoughts drift back to Advertising 2713, a class I took last spring at Oklahoma State. I remember Dr. Overstreet telling the class that what we wear, where we go to eat and what we eat is a direct result of promotion and advertising.

Now, my thoughts turn to agriculture. How much promotion is done in the industry of agriculture and how do we advertise the FFA?

Certainly, agriculture is becoming more aggressive in advertising commodities. Beef was probably the first solid piece of food I received as a baby. I have eaten beef for 20 years because I am a "meat and potatoes" person. Now, I eat beef because it is good and Cybill Shepherd says it's fashionable.

This year, for the first time in history, poultry consumption surpassed pork. To regain their share of the market, a new advertising campaign launched by pork producers now claims pork is "the other white meat."

Not to be left out, dairy farmers are doing an excellent job promoting the wholesomeness of their products with the "Real" seal. I can hardly sit through one of those television commercials with the mountains of melty cheese, yummy yogurt and tempting ice cream without raiding the fridge.

Other commodities such as nuts, fruits, vegetables and fiber have also been successful in promotion. However, I must single out my all-time favorite—the California Raisins! Call me weak, but I just spent $24.99 on one of those little guys to hang from my car rear-view mirror. I love 'em! They sing, dance and I must have had 25 of them knock on my door on Halloween. What a great strategy, to bring life to a product!

How do we advertise the FFA? As an organization, what can we do in the area of promotion?

Life to a product—hummmm—could we do that in the FFA? Why not? The members are lively and the product is achievement, leadership and skills learned in high school agriculture.

Certainly our blue and gold jackets distinguish us from others and our favorable reputation is unmatched. As food for thought I question, "As an organization, what can we do in the area of promotion?"

As part of our educational process, the national officers engaged in an intense, two-week business and industry tour in February. I learned that success in corporate America is realized by progressive people willing to initiate change, adapt quickly and continuously promote their goods and services.

The challenge of corporate America spills over into virtually every business, industry and organization. Next time you put on official FFA dress, remember, you are promoting an industry and advertising an organization.

The challenge of corporate America is real, not just something "I heard through the grapevine." •••

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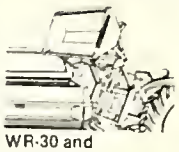

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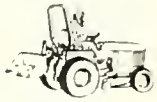

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Joke Page

The farmer sat in the kitchen while the midwife attended his wife upstairs. Suddenly, the midwife shouted *"Bring the lamp. The baby's coming."* He ran upstairs and held the lamp while his wife gave birth to a girl. Then he headed back to the kitchen. As he was halfway down the stairs, the midwife shouted, *"Bring the lamp back. It's going to be twins!"* The farmer rushed back to hold the lamp while another baby girl was born.

He headed downstairs again. He was pouring coffee when he heard the midwife shouted, *"Bring the lamp back. Here comes another!"*

"I'm staying put," the farmer yelled back. *"I think they're attracted to the light."*

Ted Harpold
Rockville, Indiana

"The weeds are bad this year. Have you ever had any jungle training?"

A man from Jamestown died and went to heaven. St. Peter was directing the activities and explained, *"Each Friday we have a get-together for the new members. To break the ice, every new member makes a speech on any subject."*

"Well," said the man from Jamestown, *"I think I'll talk on the Jamestown flood. That was some flood."*

"Well, that's good," said St. Peter, *"but I must warn you, Noah will be in the audience."*

Brandon Rodgers
Clinton, Kentucky

Man to friend: *"I'm very grateful for pro football. I'd hate to have those big guys out on the street with nothing to do."*

Greg Walker
Belton, Kentucky

Q: Why is Cinderella so bad at basketball?

A: Because she has a pumpkin for a coach.

Erika Pierson
Carnation, Washington

One summer day a father took his two sons, Toward and Away, on a fishing trip. It was a very eventful day and late that night the father told the mother all that happened.

"You wouldn't believe the fish we saw today," said the father. *"It was 20 feet long, green and had big bulging eyes. It jumped out of the water, swallowed up our beloved son Toward and disappeared back into the water."*

"That's terrible!" exclaimed the mother. *"Oh,"* said the father, *"that's nothing, you should have seen the one that got Away!"*

Gale Wilson
Elgin, Oregon

A man went out to dinner with his boss and his wife. While they were waiting, he accidently burped. The boss said, *"How dare you burp before my wife."*

The man replied, *"Oh, excuse me, I didn't know it was her turn."*

J. L. Brower
Somerset, Kentucky

I'm going to have to stop my dog from chasing cars because the last car he chased, he buried in our backyard.

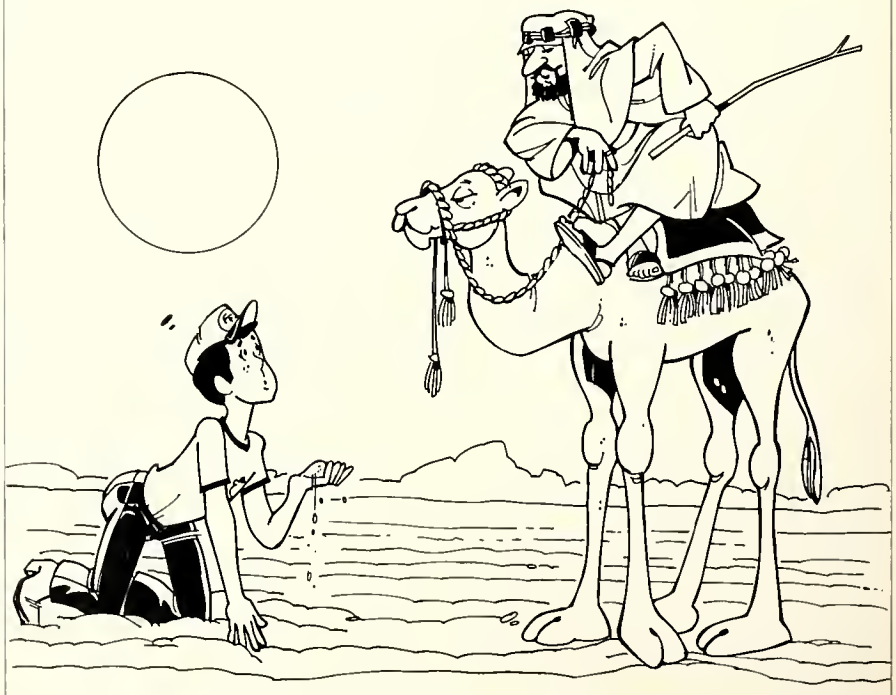
David Bruton
Timpson, Texas

A farmer's wife woke her husband, *"Today is our 40th wedding anniversary. We ought to celebrate. What do you say we cook one of the chickens?"*

"Why in the world punish a poor chicken for something that happened 40 years ago?" her husband asked.

John R. Hunter
Crawfordville, Georgia

Charlie, the Greenhand



"Your county agent said you had some questions regarding dry farming?"

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